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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN OF

KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

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KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

BY

J. HENEAGE JESSE,

AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF ENGLAND UNDER THE STUARTS;" "MEMOIRS OF KING RICHARD III.," ETC.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN OF GEORGE THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

Birth of Prince George, afterwards George III.—Characteristics of his parents, the Prince and Princess of Wales—Juvenile Theatricals at Leicester House—Death of Frederick Prince of Wales—Position of his Widow and family—Kindness of George II. to the Princess of Wales and Prince George—The Prince created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester—Officers of his household—Plans for the Prince's education—His tutors and governors—Quarrels and changes among them.

GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK, eldest son of Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, by Augusta, daughter of Frederick the Second, Duke of Saxe Gotha, was born in Norfolk House St. James's Square, London, at half-past seven o'clock on the 4th of June 1738.* He is said to have been what is familiarly styled a "seven-months'" child. So prematurely and unexpectedly had the Princess been taken in labour that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Potter, was the only

* 24th May, O. S. London Gazette from 23rd to 27th May, 1738. The fact of the Prince of Wales having been at this time an occupant of Norfolk House, was occasioned by his discreditable quarrel with his father the preceding year, when the irritated King had ejected him from St. James's Palace. Norfolk House was pulled down in 1742, when the present mansion was erected on its site. "I saw, not much more than a year ago," writes Wraxall in 1781, "the identical bed in which the Princess of Wales was delivered [of George the Third], now removed to the Duke of Norfolk's seat, of Worksop, in the county of Nottingham." Wraxall further mentions that, with the exception of the furniture being of green silk, the bed was of a very ordinary description.—*Historical Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 5, 3rd Edition.

great personage of State who arrived in time to be present at the birth. At five o'clock in the morning Lord Baltimore, one of the Prince's Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, was despatched to Kensington Palace to acquaint George the Second of the interesting state of the Princess, and about eight o'clock the Marquis of Carnarvon set out in state to apprize him of her safe delivery. So weak and sickly was the royal infant, and so little prospect did there seem of its long surviving its birth, that at eleven o'clock the same night it was deemed expedient to send for Dr. Secker, Bishop of Oxford, as Rector of St. James's parish, by whom it was privately baptized. Subsequently, on the 2nd of July, the child was publicly baptized by the Bishop of Oxford at Norfolk House; the sponsors being the King of Sweden, the Duke of Saxe Gotha, and the Queen of Prussia. *

Of the father of the future King of England a passing notice may not be uninteresting. Of his mother much will hereafter have to be told. Frederick Prince of Wales, according to his contemporaries, had little in his character to be loved, and still less to be admired. His capital faults consisted of vanity, obstinacy, irresolution, and a not very scrupulous regard for truth. A passion for women and the

* The following are copies of the MS. entries in the Registers of Births of St. James's Parish, recording the Birth and Baptism of George 3 :—

May 1738. [O. S.]

Bapt. 24. His Royal Highness George, son of their Royal Highnesses Frederick and Augusta Prince and Princess of Wales, was born this 24th day of May 1738, between seven and eight in the morning at Norfolk-house in St. James's Square, and was privately baptized the same day by the Lord Bishop of Oxford—Rector of this Parish.

June 1738. [O. S.]

Bapt. 21. This evening the ceremony of publishing y^e^ Baptism of y^e^ son of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales was performed, and the office completed by the Lord Bp. of Oxford at Norfolk House, and the name pronounced upon this occasion was George-William-Frederick.

gaming-table constituted his principal vices. The story of his every-day life—of his love of buffoonery, of his frivolous amusements and pursuits, of his pilgrimages to consult fortune-tellers in Norwood Forest—of his suppers in Jermyn Street, at Mrs. Cannon's, the Princess's midwife—and of his stolen visits in disguise to bull-baits at Hockley-in-the-Hole—seems to afford tolerably conclusive evidence that the Prince's untimely death was no great loss to the people of England. According to Horace Walpole, he had taken Edward the Black Prince as his model, although he resembled him in no other respect than that of dying before his father.*

Yet, notwithstanding the vanity and frivolity of Frederick, Prince of Wales, he was not devoid of more amiable qualities. He was at least affable and good-tempered. He cultivated a taste for literature which, light as it was, was creditable to him; he courted the society of men of genius, and on more than one occasion stood their friend. He was also an affectionate and indulgent father, and, though apparently a faithless, was a complaisant and attentive husband. George Lord Lyttelton, who knew him intimately, described him to Philip Yorke as a Prince of a singularly easy disposition; never saying a harsh word to his family or servants, and disposed to make them happy by kind actions, "especially where it would do him credit."†

It was in the bosom of his family that the Prince was to be seen in the most advantageous light. Of the interior of his small court a pleasing picture has been bequeathed to us by the accomplished Mary Lepel, Lady Hervey—the passion of the poets of the earlier Georgian period—

"Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepel."

On the 10th of November, 1748—alluding to the un-

* Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 72. 2nd Edition.
† Hardwicke Papers; Harris's Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, vol. ii. p. 438.

happy passion for gambling which had been contracted by many ladies of rank, Lady Hervey writes — "In spite of these irregularities, the Prince's family is an example of innocent and cheerful amusements. All this last summer they played abroad, and now in the winter, in a large room, they divert themselves at base-ball, a play all who are, or have been school-boys, are well acquainted with. The ladies as well as gentlemen join in this amusement; and the latter return the compliment in the evening, by playing for an hour at the old and innocent game of push-pin." *

Private theatricals were another favourite diversion at Leicester House. The Prince delighted in dramatic performances, and endeavoured to instil the same taste into his children. More than once we find the little Princes and Princesses fretting their hour upon the stage, their instructor being the celebrated actor, James Quin, who was also the stage-manager. In after years the old actor took a pride in referring to the days when he was a court-favourite. The first speech which his former pupil delivered from the throne being much commended for the graceful manner in which it was spoken—"Ay!" said Quin, "it was *I* who taught the boy to speak." At the time of Quin's death he was in the receipt of a pension from George the Third.†

The first of the juvenile dramatic performances to which we have referred appears to have taken place on the 4th of January 1749. The piece selected for representation was Addison's play of "Cato," the character of Cato being one of those in which Quin was most famous. By the following *dramatis personæ* it will be seen that the future Sovereign performed the part of Portius, and his little sisters, the

* Lady Hervey's Letters, p. 139.

† Life of James Quin, Comedian, p. 86, London, 1776; Annual Register for 1766, p. 79.

Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, the parts of Marcia and Lucia.

Cato	Master Nugent.
Portius	Prince George.
Juba	Prince Edward.
Sempronius	Master Evelyn.
Lucius	Master Montague.
Decius	Lord Milsington.
Syphax	Master North.
Marcus	Master Madden.
Marcia	Princess Augusta.
Lucia	Princess Elizabeth.*

The prologue, spoken by Prince George, and also the epilogue, spoken by Prince Edward and his sister the Princess Augusta, were apparently composed by their royal father, and certainly they are of sufficiently indifferent merit to render it probable that they were his productions. The epilogue concludes with the following miserable doggrel:—

Prince Edward. In England born, my inclination,
Like yours, is wedded to this nation;
And future times, I hope, will see
Me General in reality.†
Indeed, I wish to serve this land;
It is my father's strict command;
And none he ever gave shall be
More cheerfully obeyed by me.‡

Frederick Prince of Wales on one occasion showed some of his poetical trash to John, Earl Poulett, and inquired of him what he thought of their merits. "Sir,"

* The Princess Elizabeth Carolina died on the 4th of September, 1759, in the nineteenth year of her age. Horace Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann on the 13th:—"We have lost another princess, Lady Elizabeth. She died of an inflammation in her bowels in two days. Her figure was so very unfortunate, that it would have been difficult for her to be happy, but her parts and application were extraordinary. I saw her act in 'Cato' at eight years old when she could not stand alone, but was forced to lean against the side-scene. She had been so unhealthy, that at that age she had not been taught to read, but had learned the part of *Lucia* by hearing the others studying their parts. She went to her father and mother, and begged she might act. They put her off as gently as they could; she desired leave to repeat her part; and, when she did, it was with so much sense, that there was no denying her."—*Walpole's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 248, Edition, 1857.

† Prince Edward died a Vice-Admiral of the Blue, September 17, 1767, at the age of twenty-eight.

‡ Lady Hervey's Letters, pp. 147, 148, note.

was the happy reply, "they are worthy of your Royal Highness!"*

The last occasion of the performance of juvenile theatricals at Leicester House appears to have been on the 11th of January, 1750, on which day Bubb Dodington mentions in his diary, that he was invited to witness the representation of Rowe's tragedy of "Lady Jane Grey" by the Royal children.†

The nature of Augusta of Saxe Gotha, like that of her husband, was stamped with the royal failing of insincerity. Her husband's friend, Lord Cobham, having been asked by Henrietta Countess of Suffolk what he considered to be the real character of the Princess, "Why," he answered, "she is the only person I could never find out: all I could ever discover was that she hated those persons the most to whom she paid the most court."‡ In other respects the private character of the Princess presents but few blemishes. Her manners were conciliating; she was generous, charitable, and accomplished, a devoted wife, and a tender mother to her numerous offspring. Lord Waldegrave speaks with deserved praise of her "most decent and prudent behaviour" during her husband's life-time;§ and even the cynical Sarah Duchess of Marlborough pays a tribute to her good-nature and civility to all who approached her person.‖ So long as her husband lived she wisely confined her political prejudices and predilections within her own breast, although at a later period she not only broke through this wholesome rule which she had laid down for the guidance of her conduct, but, by her ill-advised interference in affairs of State, proved to be the occasion of many mischievous consequences. Her chief misfortune, in fact, lay in her

* Lady Hervey's Letters, p. 147.
† Bubb Dodington's Diary, p. 31. Edition, 1784.
‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 17, *note*. 2nd Edition.
§ Earl of Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 36.
‖ Correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, vol. ii. p. 218.

ignorance of the laws of England and of the character of its people; her chief error in believing herself competent to manage their affairs. The lofty notions of the royal Prerogative, and the exclusive and narrow-minded principles with which she sought to impregnate the mind of her son, were not the less pernicious from their having been well-intentioned. She succeeded, indeed, in making him a pious Christian, but no means could be more injudicious than those which she adopted in the hope of making him a good king.

Frederick Prince of Wales expired on the 20th of March 1751, in the forty-ninth year of his age.* The grief of his family, as well as the consternation of his political adherents, were rendered the greater in consequence of the calamity having been altogether unexpected. He had recently, indeed, been suffering from a severe cold, but for some days past had been declared to be convalescent. On the day on which he died, Dodington inserts in his Diary—"I was told at Leicester House at three o'clock that the Prince was much better, and had slept eight hours in the night before. Before ten o'clock at night the Prince was a corpse." He was lying in bed listening to the performance on the violin of Desnoyèrs, a fashionable dancing-master, when, in the midst of a fit of coughing, he suddenly laid his hand upon his stomach, as if in pain, and exclaimed, "*Je sens la mort!*" The Princess, who was in the apartment, flew to his assistance, but before she could

* The death of Frederick Prince of Wales has been variously represented to have taken place at Kew, Carlton House, and at Leicester House, Leicester Square. There can be no doubt, however, that it occurred in the latter mansion, the same in which, ninety years previously, expired his interesting and ill-fated ancestress, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia; the same in which Prince Eugene lodged during his secret visit to England in 1712, and in which the Queen of George the Second gave birth to her second son, the hero, or, as some would have it, the "Butcher" of Culloden.—See *Cunningham's Handbook of London*, articles *Carlton House* and *Leicester House*; *Dodington's Diary*, pp. 96, 97; *Walpole's Reign of George* 2, vol. i. p. 71; and *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1751, p. 140.

reach his pillow life had become extinct. According to Wraxall, he expired in Desnoyèrs' arms.*

The grief of the Princess at the death of her husband was excessive. Suddenly deprived of the splendid prospect of becoming Queen of England—left the widowed mother of eight children and with the expectation of shortly giving birth to another—it was long before she could be induced to comprehend the terrible reality of her bereavement. For hours no arguments could convince her that life was extinct; for hours she persisted in remaining with the dead body of her husband. When at length, however, she was prevailed upon to retire to her own apartment, her natural fortitude of mind gradually returned to her assistance. Rising from her bed at eight o'clock in the morning, she calmly performed the painful duty of examining the papers of her late consort, and of committing to the flames such as she deemed it impolitic to preserve.†

George the Second, though he had hitherto shown but little partiality for his daughter-in-law, nevertheless behaved towards the Princess, in the first days of her widowhood, with great and unexpected kindness. Lord Lincoln, the Lord in Waiting, was immediately despatched to Leicester House with a message of condolence, and in due time the
Mar. 31. King himself visited the afflicted widow. Refusing to make use of a chair of state which had been provided for him, he

* Coxe's Memoirs of the Administration of the Right Hon. Henry Pelham, vol. ii. pp. 164—6; Dodington's Diary, pp. 96—8; Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 77; Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his Own Time, vol. 2. p. 46, 3rd edition. On opening the Prince's body, the cause of his death was found to have been an abscess, which had suddenly burst, and occasioned suffocation. It was on the occasion of the Prince's death that Dr. William George, Provost of Eton, addressed to the youthful Heir Presumptive those admirable Latin Iambics, commencing—

"Spes nuper altera, prima nunc Britanniæ"—

of which Pope Benedict the 14th observed, that had the author of them been a Catholic, instead of a Protestant Divine, he would have made him a Roman Cardinal.—*Nichols's Illustrations of the Literary History of the 18th Century*, vol. 9, p. 575. A copy of Dr. George's Iambics will be found in the Appendix.

† Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 77.

seated himself on the sofa beside the Princess, and at the sight of her sorrow is said to have been affected even to tears. When his eldest grandchild, the Princess Augusta, attempted to kiss his hand, he not only refused the proffered homage, but, taking her in his arms, embraced her with great apparent affection. To his grandsons he said, "Be brave boys; be obedient to your mother, and endeavour to do credit to the high station to which you are born." The King, moreover, subsequently paid his daughter-in-law the compliment of selecting her to be the guardian of the heir to the throne, and also of awarding her, on her re-appearance in public, the same honours that had formerly been enjoyed by the late Queen Caroline.

To his grandson, Prince George, who was now in his thirteenth year, George the Second behaved with no less kindness. "The King," writes the Duke of Newcastle to the Lord Chancellor on the 9th of April, "continues to be perfectly satisfied with the Princess, and is in raptures with the young Prince."* He, who had never acted the tender father, delighted, according to Walpole, in playing the "tender grandfather." † Within three weeks after the death of his father, the household of the young Prince was declared. The Earl of Sussex, ‡ Lord Downe, § and Lord Robert Bertie ‖ were appointed Lords of his Bedchamber, and Colonel John Selwyn ¶ Treasurer of his Household. On the 25th of April the Prince kissed hands on being created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.** Apr. 10.

* Hardwicke Papers; Harris's Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, vol. ii. p. 436.

† Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 78.

‡ George Augustus Yelverton, second Earl of Sussex, had formerly been a Lord of the Bedchamber to Frederick, Prince of Wales. He died, unmarried, January 8, 1758.

§ Henry Pleydell, third Viscount Downe, subsequently commanded the 25th Regiment at the battle of Minden in 1759. He was mortally wounded the following year at the Battle of Campen, near Wesel, and died, unmarried, December 9, 1760.

‖ Fourth son of Robert, first Duke of Ancaster. He was a general officer in the army.

¶ Father of the celebrated George Selwyn, and formerly an aide-de-camp to the great Duke of Marlborough. He died November 5, 1751.

** "*St. James's, April* 20.—His Majesty has been pleased to order Letters Patent

The Prince, to the close of his life, entertained a tender regard for the memory of his father. When his death was first announced to him the child cried bitterly.* Ayscough, his tutor, observing him lay his hand upon his breast, expressed his apprehension that his Royal Highness was unwell. "I feel," said the young Prince, "something here, just as I did when I saw the two workmen fall from the scaffold at Kew." To Viscount Cobham we find him writing shortly after his father's death:—

"Leicester House, *April* 26, 1751.

"My Lord,

"I am obliged to you for your affectionate expressions of concern for my misfortune in losing the best of fathers.

"Your attachment to me gives me great pleasure, and I am, with great regard,

"George P." †

Again, many years after the Prince had ascended the throne—on an occasion of the celebrated Countess of Huntingdon waiting upon him to complain of the balls and routs which, under the primacy of Archbishop Cornwallis, were permitted in Lambeth Palace—we find him alluding in very feeling terms to his father's untimely death. "I remember seeing your ladyship," he said, "when I was young. You then frequented the Court circle, and I cannot forget that you were a favourite with my revered father." ‡

Towards his grandfather, the Prince entertained no such affectionate feelings. It was a circumstance well known to the sons of George the Third, that George the Second, in

to pass under the Great Seal of Great Britain, for creating His Royal Highness George William Frederick, (the Prince of Great Britain, Electoral Prince of Brunswick Lunenburgh, Duke of Edinburgh, Marquis of the Isle of Ely, Earl of Eltham, Viscount of Lanceston, Baron of Snaudon, and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter) Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester."—*London Gazette* from April 16 to April 20, 1751.

* Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. ii. p. 78.

† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 96.

‡ Life and Times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon, vol. ii. p. 283.

a moment of ungovernable rage, so far forgot himself as actually to *strike* his high-spirited grandson. "I wonder," was an observation of the late Duke of Sussex, while passing through the apartments of Hampton Court, "in which of these rooms it was that George the Second struck my father. The blow so disgusted him with the place, that he could never afterwards be induced to think of it as a residence." *

The fact that Frederick Prince of Wales, notwithstanding his frivolity, took a deep and laudable interest in the education of his sons, is evinced by the following schedule of instructions, drawn up by him for the guidance of their governor, Lord North, of which the original, in the Prince's own handwriting, is in the possession of Baroness North at Wroxton Abbey:—

"Clifden, Octbr the 14th, 1750.

"*The Hours for the Two Eldest Princes.*

"To get up at 7 o'clock.
"At 8 to read with Mr. *Scot* till 9, and he to stay with 'em till the *Doctor*† comes.
"The *Doctor* to stay from 9 till Eleven.
"From Eleven to Twelve, Mr. *Fung.*
"From Twelve to half an hour past Twelve, *Ruperti;* but Mr. *Fung* to remain there.
"Then to be Their Play hour till 3 o'clock.
"At 3 Dinner.
"Three times a week, at half an hour past four, *Denoyer* comes.
"At 5, Mr. *Fung* till half an hour past 6.
"At half an hour past 6 till 8, Mr. *Scot.*
"At 8, Supper.
"Between 9 and 10 in Bed.
"On Sunday, Prayers exactly at half an hour past 9 above stairs. Then the two Eldest Princes, and the two Eldest Princesses, are to go to Prince George's apartment, to be instructed by Dr. Ayscough in the Principles of Religion till 11 o'clock.
"For my Lord North."

[Endorsed in the handwriting of Lord North.]

"The Prince of Wales's Regulation of the Studies of Prince George and Prince Edward. Deliver'd to me October, 1750, upon my being appointed their Governor; written by his own hand."‡

Nevertheless, both previously to, as well as after, the

* This anecdote was related to the author by the person to whom the Duke of Sussex addressed the observation.

† The Prince's preceptor, Dr. John Thomas. See post, p. 18.

‡ Notes and Queries, Third Series, vol. vi. p. 7.

death of Frederick Prince of Wales, the education of the heir to the throne had evidently been much neglected. He had entered into his seventh year when Dr. Francis Ayscough, afterwards Dean of Bristol, was nominated his preceptor. Ayscough was apparently indebted for the appointment to his having married Anne, daughter of George Lord Lyttelton, the poet and historian, whose tutor he had formerly been. He was thus closely allied by marriage to the powerful house of Grenville, to which connection he was beholden for the further post which he held as clerk of the closet to Frederick Prince of Wales.* By Ayscough himself we are apprised that when he entered upon his duties as preceptor to the heir to the throne, he was fully sensible of the high importance of the trust confided to him. "I thank God," he writes to Dr. Doddridge on the 16th of February 1745, "I have one great encouragement to quicken me in my duty, which is, the good disposition of the children entrusted to me. As an instance of it, I must tell you that Prince George, to *his* honour and *my* shame, had learned several pages in your little book of verses, without any directions from me. And I must say of all the children—for they are all committed to my care—that they are as conformable, and as capable of receiving instruction as any I ever yet met with. How unpardonable then should I be in the sight of God and man if I neglected my part towards them! All I can now say is that no care or diligence shall be wanting in me, and I beg the prayer of you and every honest man for the Divine blessing on my endeavours." † Yet, notwithstanding these fair professions, apparently a worse appointment than that of Ayscough could scarcely have been made. When, at a later period, Lord Lyttelton interfered to prevent his dismissal, the reply

* Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 32.

† Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, vol. i. p. 175-6; Annual Register, vol. lxii. p. 704.

which he received from Mr. Pelham, then Prime Minister, was not a very complimentary one. "I know nothing of Dr. Ayscough," he said.—"Oh yes"—he added after a pause—"I recollect a very worthy man told me in this room two years ago that he was a great rogue." *

Ayscough's manners are said to have been insolent, and his brother clergy accused him of heterodoxy. In vain the Princess of Wales taxed him with her son's backwardness in his studies. His reply was, that the Prince was able to make Latin verses. In vain, too, she complained to her husband of Ayscough's remissness. Ayscough had rendered himself much too useful to the Prince, in managing his privy purse and his election affairs, to admit of his services being dispensed with. The heir to the throne at eleven years of age is said to have been unable to read English. †

It was under these circumstances that the Princess contrived to secure the services—as sub-preceptor to her sons—of one George Scott, who owed the selection, it has been said, to the recommendation of Lord Bolingbroke. ‡ The little that has been recorded of Scott is in his favour. He seems to have conscientiously discharged the important duties entrusted to him, and, notwithstanding he was bold enough to speak disparagingly of the understanding of the young Prince, and hardy enough to argue on learned topics with Lord Bute, he long continued to be a favourite with the Princess of Wales. More than fifty years afterwards, we find George the Third speaking in high terms of commendation of his former sub-preceptor. §

* Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 79. † *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 80.

‡ Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. pp. 167, 168.

§ Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose, vol. ii. p. 188. "I never knew a man," writes Rose, "more entirely blameless in all the relations of life; amiable, honourable, temperate, and one of the sweetest dispositions I ever knew." *Ibid. note.* See also Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 10, and Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 167. Mr. Scott was afterwards a Commissioner of Excise.

The death of Frederick Prince of Wales completely revolutionised the fortunes and the social position of his eldest son. The young Prince had now become Heir-Presumptive to a Crown, the present wearer of which had entered into his sixty-eighth year. Under these circumstances, it was only to be expected that the Prime Minister, Mr. Pelham; and his brother in blood and power, the Duke of Newcastle, should have endeavoured to establish a guiding, if not exclusive influence, over the mind of the future Sovereign. In order to accomplish this purpose it was necessary, in the first instance, to effect an almost entire change among those who had the present charge of the Prince's education. Hitherto he had had for his governor Francis Lord North, * whose chief qualifications for that responsible post would seem to have been amiability, and good moral conduct. In his room the Pelhams obtained the appointment of Simon Lord Harcourt, a nobleman whom Walpole sarcastically describes as "a civil sheepish" peer, more in want of a governor himself than qualified to be the governor of others. Devoted to the pleasures of the table and of the hunting-field, Lord Harcourt is said to have been perfectly satisfied that he had done his duty, so long as he was unremitting in his exhortations to his royal pupil to turn out his toes. He was intended, indeed, to be a mere puppet in the hands of the Pelhams. "He is a cipher," said Lord Mansfield to the Bishop of Norwich; "he must be a cipher, and was put in to be a cipher." †

Simultaneously with the removal of Lord North, the services of Ayscough were also dispensed with; Dr. Thomas Hayter, Bishop of Norwich, being appointed in his

* Created Earl of Guilford in 1773. Lord North, who was the father of the celebrated Premier, died August 4, 1790. His appointment as Governor to the Prince had taken place in 1750.

† Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 2, vol. i. pp. 86, 284, 290; Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 236.

room.* Although we find George the Third, in after life, speaking in no very complimentary terms of Bishop Hayter,† he was nevertheless a man of sense, learning, and refined breeding. Moreover, he seems to have discharged the duties of his important calling with singular zeal and fidelity. Resisting all interference on the part of the Princess and her friends, he persevered, despite the frowns of the one and the remonstrances of the latter, in carrying out the system of discipline which he had prescribed.‡

The person selected for the post of sub-governor was Andrew Stone, an elder brother of Dr. George Stone, Archbishop of Armagh. Stone had formerly been private secretary to the Duke of Newcastle, and was still the confidant of that nobleman. Walpole, at the same time that he admits his superior abilities, denounces him as having been a morose, proud, and mercenary man. These charges, however, appear to be altogether undeserved. Lord Waldegrave has done justice to Stone's integrity, and his friend, Bishop Newton, regrets that his abilities were lost to the Church. Stone was in fact a fine scholar, and at Oxford, where he had been the friend and rival of the celebrated Lord Mansfield, had succeeded in carrying off some of the first honours of the University.§ The services of Scott were retained as sub-preceptor.

* According to Horace Walpole, (Memoirs of George 2, vol. i. p. 87), Bishop Hayter was the natural son of a "jolly old" prelate, Dr. Blackburn, Archbishop of York, "who had all the manners of a man of quality, though he had been a Buccaneer, and was a clergyman." We believe, however, that there is great exaggeration in this statement. Bishop Hayter, about a year before his death, was translated to the See of London. He died in 1762, at the age of fifty-nine.

† Rose's Diaries, vol. ii. p. 188.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 284; Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 236.

§ Stone was a personal favourite of George the Second, to whom he had acted as private secretary in Hanover in 1748, during the absence of the Duke of Newcastle. —*Coxe's Pelham Administration*, vol. i. p. 423. At a later period he held the appointments of Treasurer to Queen Charlotte and Keeper of the State Paper office. He died in December, 1773, at the age of seventy-two. "Andrew Stone," writes Bishop

Happily, with the change of preceptors, some improvement seems to have taken place in the scholarship of the heir to the throne. "The Bishop of Norwich," writes Mr. Philip Yorke to the Lord Chancellor, "was with the King in his closet this morning, in relation to the improvements made by his royal pupils in their studies. He is disposed, as I find by Lord Anson, to speak favourably of their application, and of the progress they have made since they have been under his care." * But, although the change in the Prince's establishment was undoubtedly for the better, the new governor and preceptors were unluckily unable to agree among themselves. Certain misunderstandings which had occurred between Lord Harcourt and the Bishop on the one side, and between Stone and Scott on the other, terminated at length in an open rupture. The Princess not only sided with the sub-governor and sub-preceptor, but, on her own account, complained of the Earl and Prelate. The former, she said, avoided her card-parties; the latter puzzled her sons with logic.† The Bishop charged Stone with being a Jacobite, while Stone, on his part, accused the Bishop, not only with having habitually treated him in a very slighting manner, but with having, on one occasion, lain violent hands upon him, with the design of ejecting him from the royal schoolroom. At length, formal charges were drawn up by Lord Harcourt and the Bishop against Stone, which charges, without any previous communication with the Princess, were
Doc. 6. laid before the King. Stone, they insisted, had not only repeatedly drunk the health of the Pretender in former

Newton, "was a most excellent scholar. At school and at college he distinguished himself by his compositions; and the knowledge, not only of Greek and Latin, but of the Hebrew language, which he had first learned at school, he retained and improved to the last; and was withal a man of grave deportment, of good temper, and of the most consummate prudence and discretion."—*Bishop Newton's Life of Himself*, Works, vol. i., p. 134. See also Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 10, and Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. i. p. 430, and note.

* Hardwicke Papers; Harris's Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, vol. ii. p. 455.

† Dodington's Diary, pp. 190, 192.

days, but had also been recently guilty of the glaring impropriety of permitting the heir to the throne to peruse the "Revolutions d'Angleterre, by Père d'Orleans," a work expressly written in defence of the unconstitutional measures of James the Second. In the same sweeping charges of Jacobitism, and of systematic intents to infect the mind of the heir to the throne with arbitrary principles, were included the sub-preceptor Scott, and the Princess's secretary and favourite, Cresset.* The latter, by the way, was connected by blood with the royal family, being related to the King's maternal grandmother, Eleanor d'Emiers, wife of George William Duke of Zell, a lady of the French family of d'Olbreuse.†

George the Second very properly referred the matter to his constitutional advisers, by whom, after a due investigation, the charges were declared to be without foundation. Even the timid and suspicious old Duke of Newcastle could see no grounds for consternation. Dissatisfied with this judgment, Lord Harcourt and the Bishop again preferred an appeal to the throne for the dismissal of their subordinates, and, on its being rejected, adopted the only alternative that seems to have been left them, namely that of tendering their resignations, which were unhesitatingly accepted.‡ Some months afterwards, the conduct of Stone was made the subject of Parliamentary investigation; the Duke of Bedford taking upon himself to move in the House of Lords an address to the throne, for the production of the papers connected with the late investigations. This second attack, however, proved as unsuccessful as the previous one. Only three peers and one prelate accompanied the

* Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. pp. 289, 290; Dodington's Diary, p. 197; Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. pp. 235, 236, 237, 238.

† Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 168, note. Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 92.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. pp. 289, 290; Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 238.

Duke below the bar, and accordingly the motion was negatived without the House coming to a division.*

Dec. 18. Lord Harcourt was succeeded, as governor of the Prince of Wales, by the Earl of Waldegrave, a man of the world and a votary of pleasure.† Many years afterwards, we find George the Third speaking in no very flattering terms of either of his former governors. "Lord Waldegrave," he said, "was a depraved, worthless man," the other "well-intentioned, but wholly unfit for the situation in which he was placed."‡ Yet Lord Waldegrave, despite the freedoms which he took with strict morality, was a man of strong sense and of the highest integrity. Enjoying the pleasures and amusements, which an ample fortune enabled him to indulge in, and shrinking from incurring the trouble and responsibilities of a thankless office, it had only been at the earnest entreaty of George the Second, that he was induced to sacrifice his inclinations and pursuits to what he considered to be the calls of duty. "I am too young," he observed to a friend, "to govern; I am too old to be governed."§ At the same time that Lord Waldegrave was appointed governor of the Prince, Dr. John Thomas, Bishop of Peterborough, and subsequently Bishop of Salisbury, was selected to be his preceptor. The Bishop, a gentle and unassuming person,‖ was, whether justly or not, charged by his contemporaries with being too Tory in his principles; but in other respects the selection would seem to have been an unexceptionable one.

* Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. pp. 310, 332; Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 257, &c.

† James, second Earl of Waldegrave, K. G., subsequently the husband of the beautiful Maria Walpole, who, after the Earl's death, became Duchess of Gloucester. He died April 28, 1763, at the age of 48.

‡ Rose's Diaries, vol. ii. p. 188.

§ Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 291.

‖ Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. ii. p. 238.

CHAPTER II.

Earl of Waldegrave governor of the Prince—The Prince's habits and disposition—His slow progress in education—His ignorance of the world—Visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury—Princess of Wales named Regent—Unpopularity of William Duke of Cumberland—Influence of the Earl of Bute on the Princess Dowager and on the Prince of Wales—Failure of the King's proposal to marry the Prince to a Princess of Wolfenbuttel—Proposed separate establishment on coming of age—Declined by the Prince—Lord Bute placed at the head of the Prince's household—The Prince's passion for Hannah Lightfoot, the fair Quakeress—The Prince's request for military employment declined by the King.

If the heir to the throne were prejudiced against his new governor, Lord Waldegrave would seem to have been no less prejudiced against his royal charge. In the House of Lords, indeed, we find him "speaking highly of the young Prince," * yet in his private Memoirs he adopts a very different tone. "I found his Royal Highness," he writes, "uncommonly full of princely prejudices contracted in the nursery, and improved by Bedchamber Women and Pages of the Back Stairs." † No less indolent in his habits, than docile in his disposition, the future sovereign, at the age of fourteen, would seem to have been perfectly content with remaining a cipher in the hands of his mother, so long as he was allowed to enjoy his favourite inaction. According to Horace Walpole, when, on one occasion, his sub-preceptor, Scott, remonstrated with him on his want of application, the only excuse which he could make for himself was constitutional idleness. "Idleness! sir," retorted

* Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. p. 328.
† Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 63.

Scott; "*yours* is not idleness: your brother Edward *is* idle; but you must not call being asleep all day being idle."

The Prince's indolence and want of scholarship were alike admitted and lamented by his mother. When, on one or two occasions, Dodington ventured to interrogate her in regard to the true character of his future sovereign, the Princess freely spoke her mind to him. He was honest, she said; he retained a pious and affectionate regard for his father's memory, and had hitherto given no indication of an immoral tendency. His passion, if he had any, was for his brother Edward. He was childish, said the Princess, in his habits, and backward for his years. What his preceptors had taught him, she said, she knew not; but, "to speak freely, she feared, not much." *

This conversation, it is true, took place as early as October 1752; and yet nearly three years afterwards, when the heir to the throne had attained the age of seventeen, we find his mother repeating similar complaints to Dodington. The Prince's education, she said, had caused her great pain; his "book-learning" she was no judge of, but she supposed it was small or useless, and, as to his real character, those about him were as ignorant of it as if they had never known him. On the other hand she admitted that, if not quick, he was at least intelligent, and that, though his mind had a tendency to seriousness, he was both good-natured and cheerful. †

Another point in which the young Prince was defective, was in a want of knowledge of society and mankind, a drawback regarding which Dodington, a thorough man of the world, was well qualified to advise the Princess. It was in vain, however, that he urged upon her the importance of enlarging the circle of her son's acquaintance. The young people of quality, she said, were so ill-educated and so

* Dodington's Diary, p. 171. † *Ibid.*, pp. 356, 357.

vicious that they frightened her. She was sure their bad example would contaminate her children.*

Dodington undoubtedly was in the right. "To tell you the honest truth," writes the late King of Hânover in 1845, "the impression on my mind has ever been that it was a very unfortunate circumstance for my father that he was kept, as it were aloof, not only from his brothers, but almost from all young men of his own age; and this I saw evident marks of almost daily." † Yet, on the other hand, the exclusive system pursued by the Princess had at least the happy effect of keeping his early youth unspotted from the world, and of fixing those strong religious principles which influenced all his actions in after life. Years afterwards, his youngest brother, the Duke of Gloucester, whilst sauntering with Hannah More among the flower-beds of the Bishop of London at Fulham, reverted with singular gratification to the pure and sinless home of his boyhood. "No boys," he said, "were ever brought up in a greater ignorance of evil than the King and myself. At fourteen years old we retained all our native innocence." It was a period of life, added the Duke, which he always recalled with peculiar satisfaction. ‡

Among the few occasions on which, about this period, we find the heir to the throne allowed to mingle with the great world, were those of a launch of one of the royal ships in 1754, and a visit paid by the Prince to the Archbishop of Canterbury at Croydon the following year. On the former occasion he was attended by his brothers, and by his celebrated uncle the Duke of Cumberland. "The Duke accompanied the Princes," writes Mr. John Yorke to Lord Royston, "and showed himself a very dutiful uncle, much to the edification of the multitude, who thought he expressed great fondness towards them. His behaviour to

* Dodington's Diary, pp. 172, 258.
† MS. Letter to the late Right. Hon. J. W. Croker.
‡ Life and Correspondence of Hannah More, vol. iii. p. 241.

the company was much spoke of; and in particular his engaging Sir Percy Brett,* who dined with them on board the yacht, to tell the Prince of Wales the story of his engaging the 'Elizabeth;' now and then throwing in a circumstance from his own memory with great attention and politeness."†

The particulars of the Prince's visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury, on which occasion he was accompanied by his mother and her court, are thus related by the Archbishop himself in a letter to the Lord Chancellor, dated September 4, 1755:—"They were escorted, if I say right, through the court by a company of the Buffs, and the regiment was drawn up in the town with all the officers attending, so that all military honours were paid them. I met the Princess at the coach-door, and conducted her by her hand up to the apartment. She stayed a little in the drawing-room, and then moved to the coffee and tea in the gallery, with which the table was partly furnished; but a dessert of the best fruit I could get, completed the figure, such as it was. She was

* On the 9th of July, 1745, Captain Percy Brett, then in command of the "Lion," 60 gunship, came in sight of the "Elizabeth," French man-of-war, carrying 66 guns; the latter being convoy to the "Doutelle" brig, on board of which was the "Young Pretender," on his way to raise his father's standard in the Highlands of Scotland. The "Lion" without hesitation bore down upon them, on which an action took place between her and the "Elizabeth," which was maintained with great fury and obstinacy for nine hours; when, night setting in, the "Elizabeth," in an almost disabled state, made good her retreat to Brest. The "Lion" suffered a loss of no fewer than forty-five men killed and one hundred and seven wounded, of whom seven subsequently died of their wounds. The loss of life on board the "Elizabeth" was considerably greater. In the meantime the "Young Pretender" had not only watched the progress of the conflict from the deck of the "Doutelle" with feelings of the most intense anxiety, but is said to have been so ardent in his importunities to induce her captain to take a part in the engagement, as to compel the latter to threaten he would order him to his cabin. By the return of the "Elizabeth" to France, the Prince had the mortification of being deprived of the greater portion of the arms and ammunition which he had provided for his memorable expedition. It was of Captain Brett's conduct during this most gallant action that Admiral Vernon two years afterwards observed in the House of Commons:—"Did he not attack a ship of superior force to his own, and with such courage and skill as brought honour to himself, his country, and the British flag?"—*Charnock's Naval Biography*, vol. v. pp. 240, 241, and *note; Duncan Cameron's Narrative; "Jacobite Memoirs,"* p. 7.

† Hardwicke Papers; Harris's Life of Lord Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 15.

so gracious as to order us to sit, but nobody had an elbow-chair but the Prince of Wales and the Princess. They ate a good breakfast and I was glad of that. After some little pause her Royal Highness desired to walk round the garden, and we took the opportunity of a gilded moment. She then returned to the house and received the compliments of Colonel Howard and the officers. I reconducted her to her coach in my very best manner." *

There was one illustrious member of the royal family who, had he been permitted to associate on intimate terms with the youthful heir to the throne, might, by his sagacious advice and by his example of strong sense, incorruptible integrity, and unselfish patriotism, have neutralised, to a great extent, the pernicious consequences of the educational system pursued by the Princess Dowager. That person was William, Duke of Cumberland, the second and only surviving son of George the Second. Unfortunately, however, not only had the Duke been for some years estranged from his sister-in-law, but, more recently, the circumstance of the King having preferred her to be Regent of the kingdom in the event of his own demise during his grandson's minority, had further widened the breach. † Moreover, the Duke's great unpopularity at this period furnished additional grounds for excluding him from his nephew's society. Men, who had formerly lauded to the skies his gallantry at Fontenoy, and who had half worshipped him after his victory at Culloden, now remembered

* Hardwicke Papers; Harris's Life of Lord Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 39.

† "Next Tuesday the Bill for settling the Regency will be moved for in the House of Lords; the Princess of Wales to be Regent; a Council of great officers to be named; the Duke to be one, and the King empowered to appoint, or rather add, four more by an instrument under his hand; affairs to be decided, especially peace and war, by the majority of the Council. I do not hear how the vacancies are to be filled up. The Parliament, in case of the death of the King, to continue till the Prince comes of age (eighteen). It is thought there will be some opposition, as the Princess of Wales's power is limited."—*Letter from John Laroche, Esq., M.P., to Robert Lee, Esq.*, dated May 4, 1751, *Downshire MS.*

only his loss of the former battle, and the severities which he had practised after the other. When, on some occasion, it was proposed to confer on him the freedom of one of the Companies of the City of London, a facetious Alderman suggested that it should be the Butchers' Company. Nurses frightened their infant charges into obedience with the name of the "Butcher Cumberland;" and even statesmen, when they spoke of his revised Mutiny Act, denounced it as a composition worthy of Draco. Not only did the mere vulgar believe him capable of acting the part of the wicked uncle in the tale of the Babes of the Wood, but even in the House of Commons, during the discussions on the Regency Bill, more than one member had made dark allusions to the nephews of John Lackland and Richard Duke of Gloucester; at the same time deducing, from their example, the danger of placing at the head of the army so influential and accomplished a soldier as the Duke of Cumberland.

Unhappily these "base and villanous" insinuations, as Lord Waldegrave justly styles them,* were allowed to reach, and poison the ears of the royal children. For instance, it is recorded of the Heir-Presumptive, that happening, when a child, to pay a visit to his uncle, the Duke, in order to amuse him, took down one of the swords which hung in his apartment and drew it from its sheath. To the great distress of the high-minded soldier, the child, imagining that his uncle was about to take away his life, trembled and turned pale. So unmistakable, indeed, was the cause of emotion, that subsequently the Duke, with great bitterness, complained to the Princess Dowager of the shocking impressions which had been instilled into the mind of his nephew.†

In the meantime, the Pelhams had not only failed to acquire their hoped-for influence over the mind of the heir to the throne, but there had appeared on the stage another person, whose increasing credit with the future sovereign

* Memoirs, p. 24. † Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. i. pp. 105-6.

threatened to become more formidable than even that of the Princess Dowager. That person was John Earl of Bute, between whom and the Princess it was almost universally believed that a connexion of a tender nature existed. "The Princess Dowager and Lord Bute," writes Lord Chesterfield, "agreed to keep the Prince entirely to themselves. None but their immediate and lowest creatures were suffered to approach him. Except at his levees, where none are seen as they are, he saw nobody and none saw him."* Ministers on a former occasion had, to their great discomfiture, vainly endeavoured to separate the Prince from his mother; and now they had to contend against the further difficulty of removing him from the influence and authority of Lord Bute. At length the King suggested a remedy for the evil, which his Ministers seem to have highly approved. "Bigoted, young, and chaste," writes Walpole, "what influence might not a youthful bride obtain over the Prince?" † These words, as will have been conjectured, refer to a project of marrying the heir to the throne to an eligible Princess, and by her agency removing him out of the way of his mother and of Lord Bute. The King, it appears, had, during a visit which he had recently paid to his Hanoverian dominions, been thrown into the society of the two charming daughters of the Duchess of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel. The eldest—beautiful, sensible, modest, and accomplished—had especially fascinated the old monarch, and accordingly, although the Heir-Presumptive was still a mere boy, he had set his heart upon uniting them with as little delay as possible. He only regretted, he gallantly observed, that he was too old to offer to marry her himself. "The Prince of Wales," writes Lord Waldegrave, "was just entering into his eighteenth year, and being of a modest, sober disposition, with a healthy, vigorous constitu-

* Lord Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. ii. p. 472.
† Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. ii. p. 36.

tion, it might reasonably be supposed that a matrimonial companion would be no unacceptable amusement."* Such also was the conviction of the well-meaning monarch, and accordingly he invited the fair sisters to pay him a visit in England; his object, as he said, being to make two young persons happy, and to see his grandson married during his own lifetime.

The Princess Dowager, however, entertained other views in regard to her son. Not only was she in dread of the influence which a beautiful and accomplished young Princess might obtain over his mind, but she also hoped to advance the interests of her family by marrying him to a Princess of the House of Saxe Gotha. Moreover she was the mother—as she told Dodington—of eight other children, for whom she trusted the King would make some provision before he disposed of her eldest son in marriage; in addition to which her son might possibly himself become the father of as numerous a family, and in such case would naturally prefer their interests to those of his brothers and sisters. As yet, she said, the King had not condescended to speak to her on the subject, but should he do so, she should certainly tell him "how ill she took it." †

That the Princess had instilled into the mind of the Heir-Presumptive a strong aversion to a match with a daughter of the House of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, there can be little question. "The young Princess," writes Lord Waldegrave, "was most cruelly misrepresented. Many even of her perfections were aggravated into faults, his Royal Highness implicitly believing every idle and improbable aspersion, till his prejudice against her amounted to aversion itself." ‡ "Her ladyship's boy," writes Walpole, "declares violently against being *bewolfenbuttled*—a word which I do not

* Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 39.
† Dodington's Diary, pp. 354, 355, 356.
‡ Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 41.

pretend to understand, as it is not in Mr. Johnson's new Dictionary."* Under these circumstances the King, greatly to his annoyance and disappointment, was compelled to relinquish his favourite project. "I remember," writes Lord Waldegrave, "his telling me with great eagerness that had he been twenty years younger, she should never have been refused by a Prince of Wales, but should at once be Queen of England." †

Still, the King and his Ministers were not without further hope of being able to effect their purpose of separating the Prince from his mother. He was to be of age on the 4th of June 1756, on the completion of his eighteenth year; an event which would necessitate the formation of a separate establishment for him, and accordingly, as the time approached, Lord Waldegrave was deputed by the King to communicate to the Prince his intended removal from Leicester House, as well as the provision which his Majesty proposed to make for his future maintenance, and for the support of his dignity as Prince of Wales. The King—as the Earl told the Prince—being moved by the affection which he had ever conceived for him, had graciously consented to settle on him an income of 40,000*l.* a year; in addition to which the apartments in St. James's Palace, which had been occupied by the late Queen, as well as those of the late Prince of Wales in Kensington Palace, had been ordered to be put in a state of preparation for his reception. This announcement, however, afforded but little satisfaction to the young Prince. He expressed, indeed, a dutiful and grateful sense of the King's kind intentions towards him; but at the same time dwelt feelingly on the great affliction which a separation from his mother would entail upon both, and expressed an earnest desire that his

* Walpole's Letters, vol. ii. p. 457. Edition, 1857.
† Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 40.

Majesty might be graciously pleased to reconsider his resolution.

The Prince's reply placed the Government in an awkward dilemma. To revoke the King's bounty was out of the question; to incur the resentment of the heir to the throne was, to say the least, inexpedient; and, lastly, to have insulted the future sovereign, by having recourse to violent measures, would have covered the ministry with odium. True it is, that the King himself, when Prince of Wales, had supplied a precedent of an heir to the throne having been put under arrest, but, in the present instance, the person proscribed was not, as in his grandfather's case, a rebellious son, but an amiable and unsophisticated young Prince whose only crime was an excess of filial love. Moreover the Prince was of age by Act of Parliament, and consequently had a perfect right to consult his own inclinations. Under these circumstances, Ministers not only withdrew their opposition, but, in order to ingratiate themselves with their future sovereign and his mother, persuaded the King, though not without much difficulty, to consent to Lord Bute being placed at the head of the Prince's new establishment.* "Sir," once observed the petulant old monarch to Henry Fox, "it was *you* made me make that puppy, Bute, Groom of the Stole." Not less ungracious was the manner in which, unaccompanied by either comment or remark, the King caused the gold key of office to be delivered to the aspiring favourite. The Duke of Grafton, however, as he quietly slipped the bauble into the Earl's pocket, whispered to him not to resent the affront; a piece of advice which the other very prudently followed.†

In addition to the appointment of Lord Bute as Groom

* Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 68.

† Walpole's Reign of George 2, vol. ii. pp. 207, 208, 256. Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, pp. 79, 80.

of the Stole, the Earl of Huntingdon * was selected to be Master of the Horse in the Prince's new establishment; the Earls of Pembroke † and Euston, and Lord Digby were appointed Lords of his Bedchamber, and Lord Bathurst ‡ Treasurer of his Household.

Happily, we find those who were admitted to the Prince's society speaking in much more favourable terms of him as he advanced towards manhood. For instance, it was just when he had completed his eighteenth year that an accomplished lady, Mrs. Calderwood of Polton, received the following pleasing account of him from his late sub-preceptor Scott:—"I had frequent opportunities," she writes, "of seeing George Scott, and asked many questions about the Prince of Wales. He says he is a lad of very good principles, good-natured, and extremely honest; has no heroic strain, but loves peace and has no turn for extravagance; modest and has no tendency to vice, and has as yet very virtuous principles; has the greatest temptation to gallant with the ladies, who lay themselves out in the most shameful manner to draw him in, but to no purpose. He says if he were not what he is they would

* Francis Hastings, tenth Earl of Huntingdon, celebrated by Akenside in a noble ode:—

"But thee, O progeny of heroes old,
Thee to severer toils thy fate requires;
The fate which formed thee in a chosen mould,
The grateful country of thy sires,
Thee to sublimer paths demand."

Ode to Francis, Earl of Huntingdon, 1747.

Lord Huntingdon died, unmarried, 2nd October, 1790.

† Henry tenth Earl of Pembroke. On the 13th of the preceding month of March, the young earl had married a beautiful girl of eighteen—for whom George the Third, at some period of his youth, certainly entertained a passion—Lady Elizabeth Spencer, daughter of Charles, third Duke of Marlborough. Further mention of her will be found in the course of these pages.

‡ The celebrated Allen, afterwards first Earl Bathurst, the chosen friend of the poets and wits of the reigns of Queen Anne and George the First.

"Who then shall grace or who improve the soil?
Who plants like Bathurst, or who builds like Boyle?"

Lord Bathurst died 16th Sept., 1775.

not mind him. Prince Edward is of a more amorous complexion, but no court is paid to him, because he has so little chance to be King." *

Only on one occasion, whether at this or at any other period of the Prince's life, is there evidence that his constitutional warmth of temperament, and susceptibility to the fascinations of female loveliness, tempted him to outstep the strict boundaries of continence and chastity. That single exception—it is needless perhaps to remark—was his early and notorious passion for the fair Quakeress, Hannah Lightfoot, a passion to which a peculiar interest attaches itself, derived partly from the exalted rank of one of the lovers, partly from their youth and the previous purity of their lives, but, still more, from the strange mystery which hangs over the fate of a beautiful girl who, whatever may have been her secrets or her sorrows, carried them apparently unshared and uncomplainingly to her grave.

The family of Hannah Lightfoot originally came to London from Yorkshire. Her father, a respectable tradesman, resided at Execution Dock, Wapping in the East, a district sufficiently obscure and remote, one would have thought, to have preserved his daughter from the temptations and perils of a court. Unfortunately, however, she had an uncle, a prosperous linendraper of the name of Wheeler, who resided in the more fashionable vicinities of Leicester House and St. James's Palace; and as his children were nearly of the same age as herself, it was only natural that she should occasionally become a guest in his house. The house in question—interesting perhaps as having been the last in which she was destined to press the pillow of innocence—stood at the south-east corner of Carlton Street, and of what is now called St. Alban's Place; but which was then a continuation of

* The "Coltness Collections," printed for the Maitland Club, 1842, p. 116.

Market Street, which ran, and still runs, southward out of Jermyn Street, St. James's.

It seems to have been early in the year 1754, that the heir to the throne first accidentally encountered, and became enamoured of Hannah Lightfoot. His confidante and agent on the occasion is said to have been his mother's maid of honour, Miss Chudleigh, afterwards the too celebrated Duchess of Kingston,* a lady whose intimate experience in the intrigues and gallantries of a court enabled her to obtain the ear, and dazzle the imagination, of her intended victim. Unhappily, the fair girl listened to her, and was persuaded to forsake the home of her youth. Her parents advertised for her in the newspapers, but to no purpose. According to the account of one of her relations, her mother died of grief, the result of her daughter's disappearance.†

It has been asserted—and in fairness to Hannah Lightfoot the assertion deserves to be repeated—that when she quitted her uncle's roof in Market Street, it was for the purpose of becoming, not the mistress, but the wife of the Prince of Wales. As the Royal Marriage Act was not at this time in existence, the consequences of such a marriage, had it really taken place, might have proved most momentous to the royal family. If for instance, as has been confidently stated, Hannah Lightfoot became more than once a mother, *her* children by the Prince of Wales, and not those which Charlotte of Mecklenburgh-Strelitz subsequently bore him, would have been the rightful and legitimate heirs to the crown. Nay, even had she remained childless, the fact o her having been alive at the time of the marriage of George the Third and Queen Charlotte would have rendered that marriage null and void, and have bastardised its issue.

The first occasion, we believe, on which this very im-

* Monthly Magazine, vol. li. p. 532.

† See a letter from a surviving cousin of Hannah Lightfoot in the Monthly Magazine, vol. lii. pp. 109, 197; vol. li. p. 532.

probable marriage was positively asserted to have taken place, was in a scandalous work—afterwards suppressed—entitled, "Authentic Records of the Court of England." It is there confidently asserted that the Prince was legally married to Hannah Lightfoot in Curzon Street Chapel, May Fair,* in the presence of his brother, the Duke of York; that, after the death of George the Second, the discovery of the young King's secret spread great consternation amongst his Ministers; that subsequently they found means of "disposing" of the fair Quakeress by inducing her to marry a person of the name of Axford; and that from this time her royal lover, notwithstanding his diligent and anxious inquiries, was never able to discover the place of her retreat. Lastly, it is stated, that in 1765, at the time when Queen Charlotte was in the family-way with the late King William the Fourth, so alarmed was she, on the secret of her consort's former engagement being revealed to her, that she insisted upon the nuptial ceremony being performed anew between them, which was accordingly done at Kew.† Most of these statements, it may be mentioned, are repeated in another scandalous and suppressed work, published in 1832, entitled, "A Secret History of the Court of England, from the Accession of George the Third to the death of George the Fourth;" this latter work being professedly from the pen of Lady Anne Hamilton, lady of the bedchamber to Caroline, Princess of Wales.‡ These two unworthy literary productions, though evidently composed by persons not ill-informed in the secret history of the court, are nevertheless so unmistakably distorted, either by invention or exaggeration, that at first our impulse is to dismiss them as utterly worth-

* "She eloped in 1754, and was married to Isaac Axford at Keith's Chapel, which my father discovered about three weeks after."—*Letter from Hannah Lightfoot's Cousin in Monthly Magazine*, vol. lii. p. 197.

† Authentic Records, pp. 2—7; London, 1832.

‡ Anne, eldest daughter of Archibald, Duke of Hamilton, was born March 16, 1766, and died October 10, 1846.

less. Singularly enough, however, we find more than one of the statements, which are contained in the "Authentic Records" and in the "Secret History," endorsed by the respectable authority of a no less well-informed person than William Beckford, the author of "Vathek."* His account, it is true, differs in its details from the others; but, on the other hand, the discrepancies are thereby rendered confirmatory rather than otherwise, as apparently showing that the several statements were derived from persons who had no communication with each other. For instance, instead of Curzon Street Chapel being specified as the scene of the marriage between the Prince and Hannah Lightfoot, the ceremony, according to Beckford, was performed at Kew in the presence of Mr. Pitt † and of one, Ann Taylor. Here, curiously enough, we have Mr. Pitt brought forward as an actor in the drama, while in the "Authentic Records" he is introduced as playing an equally prominent part in assisting the young King to discover the retreat of his mistress. Again, according to the "Secret History," the clergyman who married Hannah Lightfoot to the Prince of Wales was Dr. Wilmot, while, according to Beckford's version, this was the person who solemnised the second marriage between the King and Queen.‡ Lastly, both by Beckford and in the

* "Conversations with the late Mr. Beckford;" New Monthly Magazine, vol. lxxii. p. 216.

† Afterwards Earl of Chatham. In 1754, the year in which George the Third is said to have formed his connexion with Hannah Lightfoot, Mr. Pitt was on intimate terms at Leicester House.

‡ The Reverend James Wilmot, D.D., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, Rector of Barton-on-the-Heath, and Aulcester, Warwickshire. "He was a good scholar," said Beckford, "a sincere Whig, and most intimate friend of Lord Chatham. He had opportunities of being fully acquainted with everything." According to Dr. Wilmot's niece and biographer—"He lived in habits of friendship and confidence with some of the most distinguished characters of the age, among whom were Mr. Grenville, Lords Northington, Shelburne, and Sackville, together with the celebrated Mr. Wilkes, Mr. Thurlow, and Mr. Dunning. The late Bishop of Worcester, Lords Plymouth, Archer, Sondes, Bathurst, Grosvenor, Craven, and Abingdon, were on terms of intimacy with him, more particularly the three first-named noblemen." His biographer also mentions as among her uncle's intimate friends the Princess Amelia, the King's brothers, the Dukes of York and Gloucester, Lord Chatham, Lord North,

"Secret History," Dr. Wilmot is spoken of as a likely person to have written the letters of Junius.*

Of the amount of credit which ought to be placed in these different statements the reader must be left to judge for himself. For our own part, we are inclined to attach some slight importance to another irregular version of the story—the version, by the bye, which the nearest relatives of Hannah Lightfoot regarded as the truth—namely, that when she quitted her uncle's roof it was for the purpose of being married, not to the heir to the throne, but to one who had been bribed to lend her his name, and to give her his hand at the altar on the condition that he was never to claim her as his wife. Presuming, for the sake of argument, that this unholy marriage really took place, the projectors of it had doubtless in view the double object of preventing the infatuated young Prince from marrying Hannah Lightfoot himself, and also of precluding the possibility of their issue hereafter preferring any inconvenient claims to legitimacy. The name of the individual who is presumed to have led Hannah Lightfoot to the altar is, we believe, correctly stated in the "Authentic Memoirs." It was Axford. According to the account of a distant connexion of Hannah Lightfoot who

Burke, and other eminent persons.—*Life of the Reverend James Wilmot, D.D.*, by his Niece, Olivia Wilmot Serres, London, 8vo, G. E. Williams, 1813, quoted in Notes and Queries, vol. x. p. 349, First Series.

* New Monthly Magazine, *ut supra*, p. 216. A fourth authority for the supposition that a marriage was solemnised between George the Third and Hannah Lightfoot is to be found in a handsomely-printed pamphlet, entitled "An Historical Fragment relative to her late Majesty Queen Caroline," printed for Hunt, London, 1824, pp. 44. 45. "The Queen (Caroline) at this time laboured under a very curious and, to me, unaccountable species of delusion. She fancied herself neither a wife nor a Queen. She believed his present Majesty (George the Fourth) to have been actually married to Mrs. Fitzherbert; and she as fully believed that his late Majesty, George the Third, was married to Miss Hannah Lightfoot, the beautiful Quakeress—previous to his marriage with Queen Charlotte under the colour of an evening's entertainment after the death of Miss Lightfoot—and as that lady did not die till after the births of the present King and His Royal Highness the Duke of York, her Majesty really considered the present Duke of Clarence the true heir to the throne."—"How the Queen," adds the writer, "came to entertain such romantic suppositions as these it is not for me to know; but that she did entertain them I know well." *Ibid, p.* 45.

was living in the year 1821—"The general belief of her friends was that she was taken into keeping by Prince George directly after her marriage to Axford, but never lived with him." * At Knowle Park in Kent is an interesting portrait of Hannah Lightfoot, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The catalogue describes it as the portrait of *Mrs. Axford.*

One other trifling incident may be recorded as tending to corroborate the presumption that Hannah Lightfoot was the wedded wife of Axford. As soon, it is stated, as the ceremony was performed she was conducted to the house of "one Perryn of Knightsbridge," where she received the visits of her royal lover; † the important feature of the anecdote being that, within the present century, a family of this uncommon name was discovered to be still residing in the district. Its members carried on the business of dressmaking in Exeter Street. ‡

Not only has it been asserted that Hannah Lightfoot bore children to her royal lover, but one or two respectable

* Monthly Magazine, vol. lii. p. 197. A correspondent writes in April, 1856, to the "Notes and Queries" (*vol. i., p. 322, 2nd Series*):—"Mrs. Philipps (a cousin of Hannah Lightfoot) informs me by letter, dated 27th February last, that her late father, Henry Wheeler, Esq., of Surrey Square, was the last of the family who saw her, *on her going to Keith's Chapel to be married to a person of the name of Axford*, a person the family knew nothing of. *He* never saw her, or heard of her, after the marriage took place. Every inquiry was made, but no satisfactory information was ever obtained respecting her." The solemnisation of marriages in Curzon Street Chapel, May Fair, by the notorious Alexander Keith, was put an end to by the "Marriage Act" in 1753. The last occasion on which he was permitted to exercise his mischievous vocation with impunity was on the 24th of March, 1753, on which day he joined in wedlock nearly one hundred couple; the numbers married in the Fleet on the same day being no fewer than two hundred and seventeen. (*Knight's London*, vol. iv. p. 64.) Presuming, therefore, that George the Third was really married to Hannah Lightfoot at "Keith's Chapel," the ceremony—inasmuch as he was born on the 4th of June, 1738—must have taken place before he had completed his fifteenth year.

† Monthly Magazine, vol. li. p. 532.

‡ Notes and Queries, vol. x. p. 532, First Series. In 1821, Axford's family were still well known as respectable tradespeople, carrying on the business of grocers on Ludgate Hill. Isaac Axford himself died about the year 1816, in his eighty-sixth year.—*Monthly Magazine*, vol. li. p. 532.

families have been named as having sprung from their intercourse. Instead, however, of these surmises, as far as we are aware, having been satisfactorily substantiated, the real fact would seem to be, that from the time of Hannah Lightfoot quitting her uncle's roof in Market Street to the hour of her death, little or nothing authentic is known concerning her. She lived, it is said, in the most secluded manner in a villa in the neighbourhood of the Hackney Road, then a sequestered suburb of the metropolis.* There too, in all probability, she died.

It was at this time, that the threatened landing on the shores of Great Britain of a French army raised to an enthusiastic height the patriotism and loyalty of the people. "All the country squires," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, "are in regimentals; a pedestal is making for little Lord Montfort that he may be placed at the head of the Cambridgeshire Militia." † Among those, who in this season of national peril applied the most eagerly for military employment,
July 20 was the young Prince of Wales. It was a crisis, he wrote to the King, when every zealous subject was pressing forward with offers of service in defence of his King and country, and consequently he, as Prince of Wales, would naturally feel uneasy should he be forced to remain in a state of inactivity. He reminded his grandfather how he himself in his youth had sought and achieved a soldier's reputation on the field of battle. The same blood, he said, flowed in the veins of both, and could his Majesty be surprised if it inspired him with corresponding sentiments? It was true, he added, that he was young and inexperienced, but he trusted that personal courage, as well as the example which he hoped to set of the

* "A retreat was provided for Hannah in one of those large houses, surrounded with a high wall and garden, in the district of Cat-and-Mutton Fields, on the east side of Hackney Road, leading from Mile End Road, where she lived, and, it is said, died."—*Notes and Queries*, vol. viii. p. 87, First Series.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 239. Edition, 1857.

highest in rank sharing the common peril, would compensate for other deficiencies.*

Considering how thorough a soldier George the Second was by nature, one might have imagined that an appeal of this kind would have warmed his heart towards his heir and destined successor. One might have imagined that he would have recalled to mind how he himself in the flower of life, when serving under the great Marlborough, had led his famous cavalry charge at the battle of Oudenarde; how, in middle age, he had challenged his brother monarch, Frederick William of Prussia, to meet him in single combat on the plains of Hildesheim; how, at a still later date, bidding his men fire for the honour of England, he had dashed, with his gallant son the Duke of Cumberland by his side, into the thickest of the fight at the battle of Dettingen,† and that, under these circumstances, he would have encouraged the military aspirations of his youthful grandson. But whatever may have been his reasons, such was not the case. When, a short time after the old King had received the Prince's letter, the Duke of Newcastle entered the royal closet, his Majesty placed the document in his hands, and, having made him read it twice over, inquired of him what kind of answer he would recommend him to return. The Prince, he said, was evidently intent upon elevating himself: *monter un pas* was his expression. "I told his Majesty," writes the Duke, "that I hoped he would return a kind answer; that the letter was very respectful and submissive." Whether this friendly suggestion was heeded, or indeed whether the Prince's letter was ever answered at all, appears to be a matter of uncertainty. The real fact would seem to have

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. pp. 182, 183.

† Respecting the gallantry displayed by George 2 at the battle of Dettingen, see in the Gentleman's Magazine for July, 1743, (*vol.* 13, *pp.* 381—387), two letters, the one from a General Officer in the British Army, and the other from an officer of the name of Kendal, who fought in Lord Ashburnham's troop. Also Coxe's Pelham Administration, vol. i. p. 69.

been that the jealous monarch either misconstrued, or pretended to misconstrue, the intention of his grandson's application. "Though the command-in-chief," observes the Duke of Newcastle, "was not named, or anything like it, the King took it to mean that; and, indeed, that did seem to be the purport of the letter."*

Advanced as George the Second was in years, he had apparently reserved, in the event of foreign invasion, the foremost post of honour and peril for himself. "The King's tents and equipage," writes Gray to Warton on the 21st of July, "are ordered to be ready at an hour's warning." †

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. pp. 182—4.

† Gray's Works, edited by Mitford, vol. iii. p. 218. With the exception of James the First, George the Third would seem to have been the first adult King of England since the Norman Conquest, or possibly since the Heptarchy, who had not on some occasion risked his life in battle. The further fact is also remarkable, that George the Second was the first King of England since the Conquest who reached the age of seventy. Since his death two other English sovereigns, George the Third and William the Fourth, have attained that age.

CHAPTER III.

Sudden Death of George II.—Accession of the Prince of Wales as George III.—Condition of Public Affairs—The King's first speech in Council, supposed to be inspired by Lord Bute—Chagrin of Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Newcastle—No change in the Ministry—Proclamation against "vice, profanity, and immorality"—Attention of George III. to the last wishes of his Grandfather—Funeral of George II.—Friendly bearing of the King to the Duke of Cumberland and other members of the Royal Family—Testimonies to the good disposition and good sense of the King—A royal chaplain rebuked—Lord Bute's share in preparing the King's first speech to Parliament—Career and character of Bute—Bute's influence at Court renders the King and his mother unpopular.

GEORGE THE SECOND expired at Kensington Palace on the 25th of October 1760, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. His death was, for his own sake, in many respects a desirable one. Not only had he been fortunate enough to recover the popularity which he had lost by the blunders and disasters that had clouded the morning of his reign, but, owing mainly to the glorious military successes which had emblazoned its setting, he had latterly become beloved and esteemed by his people. Moreover, during the last two years his sense of hearing, as well as his eyesight, had become more and more impaired. It seemed to him, he said, as though every one's face was covered with black crape.* From the afflictions, therefore, of total deafness and blindness he was mercifully preserved. He was spared, too, the misery of a long illness and expired, apparently, without a pang.

On the night preceding his death, the aged King had retired to bed to all appearance in perfect health, and on

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 266. Ed. 1857.

the following morning rose at his usual hour of six, made an inquiry respecting the wind, and expressed his intention of walking in the gardens. Having drunk his chocolate, he retired to a small apartment adjoining his bedchamber, from which his German *valet-de-chambre* presently heard a deep sigh or groan proceeding, followed by a further sound as if something heavy had fallen within. He rushed into the room, and found his royal master extended on the floor with the blood trickling from his forehead. The right ventricle of the King's heart had burst, and in falling he had struck his forehead against a bureau. With a single gasp he expired. Lady Yarmouth was immediately sent for; but the time had arrived when the presence of a mistress was more than ever indecorous, and accordingly she desired that the King's daughter, the Princess Amelia, should be summoned to take her place in the chamber of death. The scene which followed the entrance of the Princess into the apartment is described as having been a very painful one. The royal attendants had neglected to close the eyes of the dead. The Princess was both deaf and near-sighted. Some imaginary sound or other had led her to fancy that her father spoke to her, and accordingly she bent her face close to his, in hopes to catch his words. Her feelings may be more easily imagined than described when she discovered that he was a corpse.* "The King is dead;" writes Gray the poet to the Rev. J. Brown: "he rose this morning about six — his usual early hour — in perfect health, and had his chocolate between seven and eight. An unaccountable noise was heard in his chamber. They ran in and found him lying on the floor. He was directly bled, and a few drops came from him, but he instantly expired." †

* Walpole's Letters, vol 3, pp. 350, 354. Ed. 1857. Annual Register for 1760, pp. 139, 141.

† Gray and Mason Corresp., p. 226, 2nd Edition.

At the period of George the Third's accession to the crown of England he was in his twenty-third year. Seldom had a sovereign of this country ever ascended the throne under more advantageous circumstances. Instead of being an alien in the land—ignorant of its laws and almost of its language, as his father and grandfather had been before him—he had happily first seen the light on British soil, and had been nurtured and educated among its people. His predecessors, preferring the interests of their German Electorate to those of the great country over which they had been invited to rule, had not only rendered themselves unpopular with the English people, but had with difficulty succeeded in defending their throne against the influence and machinations of the House of Stuart. George the Third, on the contrary, was encumbered neither by the disadvantages of foreign birth, nor scarcely by those of a disputed succession. His only formidable rival for the throne, Charles Stuart, the darling of Scottish song, had sunk into an ignominious voluptuary, contenting himself with shooting wolves by day in the forest of Ardennes, and indulging in disreputable orgies at night. The once powerful Jacobite party in England, who formerly, under any favourable circumstances, would readily and chivalrously have ventured their lives and fortunes in his cause, had not only become disgusted with his selfishness and sensuality, but were prepared at the first propitious moment to flock to St. James's and salute the rising sun. Other advantages befriended George the Third on his accession. Great Britain, instead of groaning under the calamities, domestic as well as foreign, which had saddened the reigns of his immediate predecessors, had been restored by the genius of the illustrious Pitt to the highest state of prosperity and greatness. Under his auspices her commerce had been rendered prosperous beyond all precedent; colony had been added to colony; while victory, gained

after victory, had once more occasioned the name of an Englishman to be as much respected and dreaded over the world, as had been the case in the days of Cromwell and Queen Anne.

The circumstances under which the young Prince received the first intelligence of his accession to the throne were related by himself, many years afterwards, to George Rose. He was riding, he said, from Kew Palace to London, for the purpose of giving some orders respecting an organ which was being constructed for him, when, near Kew Bridge, he was accosted by a man on horseback, who presented him with "a piece of very coarse white-brown paper" containing no other writing than the name of "Schrieder," a German *valet-de-chambre* of the late King. This was sufficient, however, to obtain credence for the messenger, who accordingly informed him that his Majesty had been suddenly seized by an attack of illness which threatened to be fatal. The Prince promptly decided how he ought to act. Having enjoined the messenger to keep the intelligence to himself and to ride quietly forward, he intimated to his attendants that his horse had become lame, and on this pretext rode back to Kew. Later in the day he received an express from his aunt, the Princess Amelia, announcing the death of the King, on which he determined to repair at once to London. On the road, he said, he met a coach and six, which by the blue and silver liveries of the servants he knew to belong to Mr. Pitt. The great statesman had come from London to communicate to him in form the intelligence of his accession to the throne, and now followed him back to the metropolis.* The next day, the new King was proclaimed with the usual solemnities; first of all opposite his late residence, Saville House in Leicester Square, and afterwards at Charing Cross, at Temple Bar, in Cheapside, and at the Royal Exchange.

* Rose's Diaries, vol. ii. pp. 189, 190.

In the meantime, in order to avoid unnecessary parade, as well as to escape the acclamations of the populace, the new King determined on meeting the Privy Council at Carlton House, the occasional residence of the Princess Dowager. On his arrival there he dismissed the Guards on duty, desiring them to attend the dead body of his grandfather. After a brief interview with the first Minister of the Crown—the Duke of Newcastle—the King entered the council-chamber where he delivered his first speech, which even his defamer, Horace Walpole, admits to have been characterised by dignity and propriety. There was, however, one circumstance connected with it which, even to the least far-sighted of the Lords composing the great Whig party which had so long governed England, must have appeared portentous of peril. The Ministers had the mortification of listening to a speech which, instead of being of their own composition, was evidently the work of the Sovereign and of Lord Bute. At the time when it was read to them, there were present in the royal closet—besides the King—the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Holderness, and Mr. Pitt. "The King," writes the Duke, "ordered me to read it, which I did very clearly and distinctly." At its conclusion the King, as if he desired to preclude all discussion and remonstrance, inquired—"Is there anything wrong in point of *form?*" "We all bowed," writes the Duke, "and went out of the closet." At that moment Mr. Pitt's countenance is said to have betrayed an expression of mingled indignation and astonishment, singularly ominous of that strong personal dislike which, in common with most of his Whig colleagues, he apparently ever afterwards entertained towards George the Third. Bitter indeed must have been the feelings of that great man when—in words which had evidently been carefully considered—he heard denounced as an "expensive war" that glorious contest which, under his auspices, had alike raised Great Britain to a height of fame

and prosperity, hitherto unexampled in her annals, and her Sovereign to be the most powerful potentate in Europe—"words," writes the Duke of Newcastle, "which, without any previous communication with Mr. Pitt, had been actually 'projected, executed, and entered on the Council Books!'" Scarcely able to believe the evidence of his own ears, Pitt inquired of the Duke of Newcastle whether he had heard aright? He had not heard, he said, the speech distinctly, and especially the last words. "I then," writes the Duke, "repeated it to him from memory." *

But the feelings of the Duke of Newcastle—the most jealous of statesmen, as well as one of the most timid of men—must have been more painful even than those of his illustrious colleague. Pitt trembled for his country. Newcastle trembled for himself. Already some disagreeable forebodings had entered into the Duke's mind. Within three or four hours after the death of George the Second he had received a message commanding his attendance at Carlton House, where, on his arrival, he was ushered into the presence of Lord Bute. The Duke was the first person, said the Earl, to whom the King proposed to grant a private interview, his Majesty being desirous to confer with him alone before he met his Council. The words of the Sovereign, on the Duke first entering the royal closet, sounded sufficiently satisfactory. "His Majesty," writes the Duke to Lord Hardwicke, "informed me that he had always had a very good opinion of me, and that he knew my constant zeal for his family and my duty to his grandfather, which he thought would be pledges of my zeal for him." These kind expressions, however, were followed by others far less palatable.

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 214. According to the Duke of Newcastle, the words "projected, executed, and entered on the Council Books," which gave so much offence to Mr. Pitt, were a "*bloody war.*" The author, however, has examined the contemporary MS. entry of the King's speech in the books of the Privy Council Office, in which he finds the words to be "an expensive, but just and necessary war." See also the London Gazette for October 21—26, 1760.

"*My Lord Bute,*" said the King, "*is your good friend; he will tell you my thoughts.*" So remarkable an expression could scarcely have failed to startle the jealous statesman. He was, in fact, thunderstruck. "God knows," he writes to Lord Hardwicke, "and my friends know, the distress I am in. Nobody's advice equals yours with me, and my fate, or at least my resolution, must be taken before to-morrow evening; therefore, I most ardently beseech your lordship to be in town so as to dine with me to-morrow." Again, he adds:—"My opinion is they will give me good words and that they conclude, as is true, that I shall willingly go out." *

Nevertheless, for the present, the Duke had no great occasion to tremble for his place. For instance, when, four days after the death of George the Second, George Lord Lyttelton, the poet and historian, arrived in London, he found a happy lull in the world of politics, without apparently a single cloud gathering in the distance. On the 30th of October he kissed the young King's hand, and on the following day thus represents the state of affairs in a letter to the accomplished Mrs. Montagu:—"It is with great pleasure I can assure you that all parties unite in the strongest expressions of zeal and affection for our young King, and approbation of his behaviour since his accession. He has shown the most obliging kindness to *all* the royal family and done everything that was necessary to give his Government quiet and unanimity in this difficult crisis. I have been told of some great and extraordinary marks of royal virtues in his nature, and royal wisdom in his mind, by those who do not flatter. There will be no changes in the Ministry, and I believe few at Court. The Duke of Newcastle hesitated some time whether he should undertake his arduous office in a new reign, but he has yielded at last to the earnest desire of the King himself, of

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 214, &c.

the Duke of Cumberland, and of the heads of all parties and factions, even those who formerly were most hostile to him. His friend and mine, my Lord Hardwicke, has been most graciously talked to by the King in two or three audiences, and will, I doubt not, continue in the Cabinet Council with the weight and influence he ought to have there." *

On the last day of the month, the young King gladdened the hearts of the religious and sober portion of his subjects, by issuing a proclamation for the encouragement of piety and virtue, and for the prevention and punishment of "vice, profaneness, and immorality." †

For the memory of his grandfather the young King manifested a respect which was the more meritorious on account of the little sympathy which had formerly existed between them. The orders which we have seen him giving to his Guards to do honour to the dead, instead of to the living, were followed by the dismissal of Mr. Clavering, one of the Grooms of the Bedchamber, for refusing to sit up at night with the royal corpse.‡ Instead of imitating the example of the late King who, under similar circumstances, had destroyed his father's will,§ the new monarch carefully enforced every wish and injunction of the deceased. It had been one of the exhortations of George the Second to his medical attendants, that his body after his death should be embalmed with as little delay as possible, and with double the usual quantity of perfumes. He had further desired that one of the sides of the late Queen's coffin, which had purposely been left unscrewed at the time of her funeral, should be removed, and that his body, with a corresponding side of his own coffin also removed, should be placed side

* Mrs. Montagu's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 322, 323.

† Annual Register for 1760, p. 241.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 362. Edition, 1857.

§ Walpole's Reminiscences; *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. cxx.; and Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 458.

by side with hers, in order that their dust might mingle together. How piously this affectionate injunction was carried into effect was subsequently shown in the year 1837, on the occasion of the opening of the royal vault in Henry the Seventh's Chapel for the purpose of removing to Windsor the body of a still-born infant of the late King of Hanover. To Dean Milman, then one of the Prebendaries of Westminster, fell the duty of superintending the execution of the Secretary of State's warrant which empowered the Dean and Chapter to open the vault. "In the middle of the vault, towards the further end," writes Dr. Milman, "stood the large stone sarcophagus, and against the wall *are still standing the two sides of the coffins which were withdrawn.* I saw and examined them closely and have no doubt of the fact. The vault contains only the family of George the Second."* Let us further mention, that the sum of six thousand pounds, in bank-notes, having been found in the late King's private cabinet—attached to which was a written request from him that they might be delivered to his late mistress, Lady Yarmouth—the new monarch not only complied with the requisition, but added to it the further sum of two thousand guineas, which had been discovered in another drawer of the cabinet.†

Of the funeral of the late King, which took place on the 11th of November, Horace Walpole, who walked in the procession, has bequeathed us a highly graphic description. "The Prince's chamber, hung with purple and a quantity

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 8; Lord Hervey's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 541, note by Mr. Croker.

† Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 422, 2nd Series. "The King," writes Lord Lyttelton to Mrs. Montagu, "has opened his grandfather's will in presence of all the royal family; and it is said that the Duke of Cumberland is heir to the much greater part of what his Majesty had to dispose of, but that is much less than was supposed." And again, Lord Lyttelton writes:—"He (George the Second) was able to leave no more to his three surviving children than thirty thousand pounds in equal proportions, and I have heard that the Duke has given up his to his sisters. Princess Emily is come to live in my brother's house, like a private woman."—*Mrs. Montagu's Letters*, vol. iv. pp. 325, 328.

of silver lamps—" he writes, "the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands—had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber. The procession through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch—the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers, with drawn sabres and crape sashes, on horseback—the drums muffled—the fifes, bells tolling, and minute-guns—all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the Abbey, where we were received by the Dean and Chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches; the whole Abbey so illuminated that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof all appearing distinctly and with the happiest *chiaro scuro*. *

"The real serious part," continues Walpole, "was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which in all probability he must himself so soon descend: think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the Archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle; but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other.

* Walpole's Letters, vol. 3, p. 361. Ed. 1857.

Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down and, turning round, found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay attended by mourners with lights." *

Another amiable trait, which, immediately after the accession of the young King, distinguished his behaviour, was the marked kindness and delicate consideration with which—notwithstanding their long estrangement from one another—he conducted himself towards his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. He not only did all in his power to spare him any mortification, to which he was liable from having ceased to be the first Prince of the Blood, but, in a private interview to which he invited him, expressed an earnest hope that hereafter they might associate on the best of terms. He was well aware, said the King, that hitherto unanimity had not been a characteristic of the royal family, but he intended to introduce a new system into it, and at least it should not be his fault if future discords should take place.†

Many are the tributes which, at this time, we find the King's contemporaries paying to his good disposition and good sense. Among those who had known him earliest and best was the charming Mary, Lady Hervey, whose praise or blame are alike of moment. Whatever ill effects might have been produced by his faulty education, she at least knew him to be at heart amiable, straightforward, unaffected, and honest. Accordingly, on the 30th of October, five days after the accession of the "charming young King," as Walpole styles him, she writes—"Every one, I think, seems to be pleased with the noble behaviour

* Walpole's Letters, vol. 3, pp. 361-2. Ed. 1857.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 7. Walpole's Letters, vol. 3, p. 357.

of our young King, and, indeed, so much unaffected good nature and propriety appears in all he does or says, that it cannot but endear him to all; but whether anything can long endear a King, or an angel, in this strange, factious country I cannot tell. I have the best opinion imaginable of him; not from anything he does or says just now, but because I have a moral certainty that he was in his nursery the honestest, true, good-natured child that ever lived, and you know my old maxim, that qualities never change. What the child was, the man most certainly is, in spite of temporary appearances." *—"He has many amiable and virtuous qualities," writes General Yorke to Sir Andrew Mitchell; "is rather timid, but since his accession, I am told, he represents well,† and spoke his speech with great grace and dignity. He received all his grandfather's servants with great goodness, and pressed them to continue in his service, which they consented to, though some of them, particularly the Duke of Newcastle, was inclined to retire." ‡

Even the most fastidious persons, as well as those who were the most likely to be prejudiced against him, hastened to do justice to the dignity, grace, and propriety, which distinguished the conduct and deportment of the youthful Monarch. Among the first to kiss his hands was Horace Walpole who, to use his own expression, was "not apt to be enamoured with royalty." The King, he says, is "good and amiable in everything, having no view but that of contenting all the world." To Sir Horace Mann, Walpole also writes, on the 1st of November, 1760—"His person is tall and full of dignity, his countenance florid and good-natured, his manner graceful and obliging. He expresses no warmth or resentment against anybody, at most, coldness. To the Duke of Cumberland he has shown even a

* Lady Hervey's Letters, pp. 271, 272. † *Sic orig.*

‡ Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 426, 2nd Series.

delicacy of attention." Again, twelve days afterwards, Walpole writes to the same correspondent—"For the King himself, he seems all good nature and wishing to satisfy everybody. All his speeches are obliging. I saw him yesterday and was surprised to find the levee-room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. The Sovereign does not stand in one spot with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news. He walks about and speaks freely to everybody. I saw him afterwards on the throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answer to addresses well." * The King's voice and delivery, unless when he happened to be excited, are described by others as having been remarkably pleasing. "The King reads admirably," writes Madame D'Arblay; "with ease, feeling, and force. His voice is particularly full and fine. I was very much surprised at its effect." †

Among other persons who have borne pleasing testimony to the virtues of the young King is the celebrated Mrs. Montagu. "There is a decency and dignity in his character," she writes to Mrs. Carter, "that could not be expected at his years; mildness and firmness mixed; religious sentiments, and a moral conduct unblemished; application to business; affability to every one; no bias to any particular party or faction; sound and serious good sense in conversation; and an elevation of thought and tenderness of sentiment. There hardly passes a day in which one does not hear of something he has said, or done, which raises one's opinion of his understanding and heart." ‡ About this time one of his chaplains, Dr. Wilson, having ventured to eulogise him from the pulpit while he was present in the Chapel Royal, the King at once took steps to prevent a recurrence of such

* Walpole's Letters vol. 3, pp. 360-1. Ed. 1857.
† Diary and Letters, vol. iii. p. 97.
‡ Mrs. Montagu's Letters, vol. iv. p. 355.

mistimed flatteries. He desired, he said, that his chaplains might be informed that he went to church to hear the praises of God and not his own. "Thank Heaven!" writes Mrs. Montagu, "that our King is not like his brother of Prussia, a hero, a wit, and a freethinker, for in the disposition of the present times we should soon have seen the whole nation roaring blasphemy, firing cannon, and jesting away all that is serious, good, and great. But religious as this young monarch is, we have reason to hope God will protect him from the dangers of his situation, and make him the means of bringing back that sense of religion and virtue, which has been wearing off for some generations." *

A violent fall from his horse, which befell the King a few weeks after his accession, appears to have excited considerable consternation in the public mind. On recovering himself, his first considerations were for his mother, to whom, in order to prevent her being alarmed by exaggerated reports of what had happened, he immediately wrote an account of the accident. It was with difficulty that his physicians could induce him to be bled, and to less purpose that they endeavoured to dissuade him from attending the theatre in the evening. He had promised, he said, to appear in public at the performances, and he was resolved not to disappoint his subjects. On a previous occasion, when he witnessed the representation of "Richard the Third," at Drury Lane, we find the theatre completely filled *before three o'clock.*†

On the 18th of November the young monarch delivered his first speech in Parliament. Never, perhaps, on any similar occasion had the House of Lords contained a more brilliant company; seldom had St. James's Park and the streets leading to Westminster been more crowded; never

* Mrs. Montagu's Letters, vol. iv. p. 357.
† Annual Register for 1760, p. 147.

perhaps had a royal speech from the throne been hailed with more universal approbation.* The Ministers, indeed, listened to it with feelings of jealousy and alarm, it being only too evident to them that Lord Bute had had a hand in its preparation. True it is, that the speech was the composition of the Earl of Hardwicke, who had forwarded it in due official course to the Duke of Newcastle for the King's consideration and approval, but, on the other hand, on its being returned by the King to the Duke, it was found to contain certain additional "words" which could not fail to give great dissatisfaction to the Cabinet—"words," writes Lord Bute to the Prime Minister, "which his Majesty will have inserted and has for that purpose wrote out himself." Those memorable words were as follow:—"Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of *Briton;* and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider the greatest and most permanent security of my throne." There is one word in this passage which was curiously significant. The King, it is said, had originally written the word "Englishman" but Bute had induced him to alter it to "Briton." The Duke of Newcastle writes to Lord Hardwicke—"There must be some notice taken of these *royal words* both in the Motion and Address. I suppose you will think *Briton* remarkable. It denotes the author to all the world." †

To Lord Hardwicke these "royal words"—inasmuch as they were supposed to reflect on the foreign birth and foreign prejudices of his late royal master—are said to have been no less offensive than they were to the Duke of Newcastle,

* "Her royal highness, the Princess of Wales, with great part of the royal family, were in the Octagon Room at Carlton House, which looks into the Park, to see his Majesty. The Countess of Harrington's favourite room in the Park was also filled with ladies, and all the garden-walls lined with the genteelest company, as well as all the windows, quite to the House of Peers."—*Annual Register*, for 1760, p. 147.

† Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 231.

as being indicative of secret and Scottish influence behind the throne. They were, however, as Lord Hardwicke writes to his son, "by command," and he felt it was best therefore to allow them to stand without remonstrance. Newcastle on the other hand was furious. Accustomed as he had so long been to dictate the speeches and to direct the political conduct of his Sovereign, his pride no less than his fears were aroused. To Lord Hardwicke he writes—on returning the speech to him—"I make no observation, but that this method of proceeding cannot last, though we must *now*, I suppose, submit." * Unquestionably, nothing but the King's youth and inexperience could in any degree excuse so unconstitutional an exercise of the royal prerogative.

Unhappily, George the Third retained but for a brief period the favour of his subjects. The great misfortune of his public life—the source in fact of most of his political errors and of his consequent unpopularity—was unquestionably the bigoted and exclusive system under which he had been educated. By nature unsuspicious and affectionate, diffident in regard to his own abilities, conscious of his own inexperience in public affairs, entertaining a pious and dutiful reverence for his only surviving parent, and accustomed from childhood to cherish very exaggerated notions of Lord Bute's administrative talents, it was perhaps only natural that he should have been too easily content to become a cipher in the hands of others. "Like a new Sultan," writes Lord Chesterfield, "he was dragged out of the Seraglio by the Princess and Lord Bute, and placed upon the throne." † The systematic seclusion in which he had been brought up, and which after his accession he preferred to what is called society, produced the double and unfortunate effect of keeping his subjects in ignorance of his many estimable qualities, and

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 231.

† Lord Chesterfield's Letters, Edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. ii. p. 472.

of entailing on him, for a time, an amount of unpopularity which, though frequently unmerited, was not the less prejudicial to his interests. His only associates in youth had been the creatures of his mother and Lord Bute. All his political notions had been derived from the same exceptionable source. "Secluded from the world," writes Junius, "and attached from his infancy to one set of persons, and one set of ideas, he can neither open his heart to new connexions nor his mind to better information." *

John, third Earl of Bute, was the son of James, the second Earl, by Lady Anne Campbell, daughter of Archibald, first Duke of Argyle. A mere accident—a shower of rain, which by interrupting a cricket match at Clifden, had led to his services being required to make up a rubber of whist for the amusement of Frederick Prince of Wales—had been the occasion of his becoming a favourite at Leicester House and Kew. Cold and unconciliating in his manners, proud and sensitive in his nature, and solemn and sententious in his discourse, we find ourselves at a loss to conceive by what means, or by what arts, he contrived to obtain that paramount influence over the minds of the Princess Dowager, and of the Heir-Presumptive, which subsequently effected so important a revolution in the politics of their day. With the exception of a redeeming taste for poetry, antiquities, and the fine arts, a leg of unrivalled symmetry, and a talent for shining in drawing-room theatrical performances, Lord Bute's contemporaries would appear to have discovered in him but little merit, and few accomplishments.† As for his claims to political judgment and foresight, even his friend and patron, Frederick Prince of Wales, is said to have derided them. "Bute," once observed the Prince, "is a

* Letter to the Public Advertiser, May 28, 1770.

† Horace Walpole speaks of the beauty of Lord Bute's leg, which, he says, he took every opportunity of displaying, and more especially to "the poor captivated Princess." — *Memoirs of George* 2, vol. ii. p. 205. See also *Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 63, 3rd Edition, and *Smith's Life of Nollekens*,

fine showy man, and would make an excellent ambassador in a Court where there is no business." *

Even so late as the time of George the Third's accession, Lord Bute's influence over his mind seems to have been notorious only to the few; indeed it was not till the leaders of the Whig party found it essential to their interests, as well as to those of the country, to denounce him as the apostle of arbitrary power, that the world in general learned to regard him as the secret and dangerous adviser of his youthful Sovereign. Then it was that, at the instigation of the Whig grandees, a popular clamour, as fierce as any recorded in the annals of party virulence, was raised against him and the Princess Dowager. The middle classes were taught to tremble for their liberties, and the lower orders for the political existence of their idol Pitt; till one and all became agreed that the German Princess and the Scottish Earl were the bitterest of England's enemies. Placards, containing the words—"No Petticoat Government! No Scotch Favourite!"—were affixed to the walls of Westminster Hall and the Royal Exchange; the name of the Princess was publicly and indelicately associated with that of her putative paramour; she was driven from the theatres by the

vol. ii. p. 296. Walpole, speaking of Lord Bute's appearance at the Court of Frederick Prince of Wales, observes:—"Its chief ornament was the Earl of Bute, a Scotchman, who, having an estate, had passed his youth in studying mathematics and mechanics in his own little island (Bute); then simples in the hedges about Twickenham; and at five-and-thirty had fallen in love with his own figure, which he produced at masquerades in becoming dresses, and in plays which he acted in private companies with a set of his own relations."—*Walpole's Memoirs of George* 3, vol. i. p. 40. Later in life, Walpole seems to have materially changed his opinions in regard to the somewhat harsh judgment which he had formed of Lord Bute's abilities and motives. "Lord Bute," he said, "was my schoolfellow. He was a man of taste and science; and I do believe his intentions were good. He wished to blend and unite all parties. The Tories were willing to come in for a share of power after having been so long excluded; but the Whigs were not willing to grant that share. Power is an intoxicating draught. The more a man has the more he desires."—*Walpoliana*, p. 22. Lord Bute and Walpole had been at Eton together; but, as the Earl was the latter's senior by four years, it seems very unlikely that they should have associated much together in their school-boy days.

* Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 38.

filthy epithets hurled at her from the galleries. The King himself was not exempted from insult. He was one day proceeding in his sedan-chair to visit his mother at Carlton House, when a voice from the mob asked him whether "he was going to suck." *

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 16.

CHAPTER IV.

The King and the great Whig aristocracy—Eight Dukes, five Earls, and *one* Commoner in the Cabinet—Exclusion of Tories from place in all departments of administration—Bolingbroke's Ideal "Patriot King"—The King's leaning to the Tories—Whig jealousy of Bute's influence at Court—The King's passion for Lady Sarah Lennox, youngest daughter of the second Duke of Richmond—The King's personal feelings subdued by considerations of public policy—Subsequent history of Lady Sarah Lennox.

So closely connected is the domestic history of George the Third with the political events of his reign, as to render it almost impossible to dissociate the one from the other. Fortunately, however, in the war of party and in the animated struggle for ascendancy which he so long carried on with the great Whig aristocracy, there is ample and stirring interest. We shall find the Sovereign himself heading the party of reaction. We shall find him reviving hopes and aspirations among the Tory clergy and gentry, which had been dormant since the days when Atterbury had threatened to put on his lawn sleeves and proclaim the Pretender at Charing Cross, and when Bolingbroke had written to the Bishop—"The grief of my soul is this—I see plainly that the Tory party is gone." * We shall find him, not only rebelling against the powerful political party which, for nearly half a century, had dictated to his grandfather and great-grandfather, but eventually triumphing over them, supported though they were by the first statesmen and orators of the age.

* Cooke's Memoirs of Lord Bolingbroke, vol. i., p. 294, 2nd Edition.

At this early period of George the Third's reign, Great Britain may be said to have been ruled over, not by the Sovereign of the House of Brunswick, but by a Whig oligarchy composed principally of the powerful houses of Russell, Lennox, Fitzroy, Cavendish, Manners, Bentinck, Wentworth, and Pelham. The Cabinet was constructed almost entirely from this great aristocratic cabal. It consisted of fourteen members of whom, at one time, no fewer than eight were of ducal rank—namely, the Dukes of Newcastle, Argyle, Bedford, Devonshire, Grafton, Richmond, Montagu, and Dorset. It numbered, moreover, in its ranks the Earls of Harrington, Sandwich, Gower, and Bath. The Earl of Hardwicke was the only member of the Cabinet of plebeian birth. The only Commoner was Henry Pelham, brother of the Duke of Newcastle. The great Tory party had long been at a discount. Tory rectors, whose fathers had preached the doctrine of passive obedience in the days of James the Second, and who themselves still sighed for the good old times of Convocation and the Star Chamber—Tory landholders, whose fathers had fought at Edgehill and whose sons still drank in secret to the "King over the water"—were severally paying the penalty of their long and fruitless devotion to the unhappy and misguided House of Stuart. The Whigs in fact were entirely the lords of the ascendant. For more than forty years the vacancies in the peerage had been filled up by Commoners of their selection; and not only had they monopolised all the chief appointments in the Army and the State, but almost all the subordinate offices in the different public departments were occupied by their retainers or friends. On the other hand, the Tory gentry had not only been overlooked in the appointments to Deputy-Lieutenancies and the Commission of the Peace, but had had the mortification of seeing the places, which they regarded as their birth-right, conferred, one by one, on men of obscure birth and plebeian occupations. The Tory clergy

fared even worse. The great ecclesiastical dignities of the Church had been conferred entirely upon Whigs. To such an extent, indeed, had this principle been carried, that, at the time when George the Third ascended the throne, there was not a single bishop, it is said, who was not indebted, either for his lawn sleeves, or else for subsequent promotion to a richer diocese, to the Duke of Newcastle.

This undue amount of influence and power had been the natural consequence of the Revolution which placed William of Orange on the throne of England. During the brief reign of Queen Anne, the Whigs had submitted, uneasily enough, to the temporary ascendancy of the Tories. The advent, however, of a new reign revived their hopes. The favourable terms which they had formerly obtained from William the Third, added to the support which it was only natural that George the First should extend to the powerful party who had been mainly instrumental in placing him on the throne, produced the almost immediate effect of restoring the Whigs to the position which they regarded as their legitimate right. Well would it have been for them had they known how to appreciate and use their victory. No sooner, however, did they find themselves masters of the field—no sooner had the Jacobites been crushed, and the Tories humbled to the dust—than the victors began to squabble for the spoils. The former violent dissensions between Whig and Tory had, at all events, involved questions of great national and Constitutional importance, and had consequently been conducive to the public weal. To that honourable rivalry, however, had succeeded confederacies still more bitterly hostile to one another, disputes no less acrimonious, and intrigues far more contemptible. The party, which still advocated what were called "Revolution principles," was not only divided against itself, but the leaders of the rival sections were engaged in ignoble contentions whether the country was to be governed

by a Pelham, a Russell, or a Grenville, and whether the minor spoils of office were to fall to the lot of a Dodington, a Rigby, or a Calcraft. The modern Whig—though he inveighed as loudly as ever against popery and political slavery, and still drank bumpers to the revolutionary toasts of the Calf's Head Club—was only too often a systematic corrupter of popular constituencies, a keen barterer in the traffic for patronage and power, and as little liberal in his political views as the most bigoted Tory. Under the long rule of the great Whig families, the purity of popular representation had become almost a dead letter; the votes of members of the House of Commons were bargained for, almost as openly as any other commodity. During the last ten years of Sir Robert Walpole's administration, the cost to the country for secret service money had amounted to little less than a million and a half of money;* in addition to which, there is said to have been scarcely a member of the House of Commons who, if he happened to dine with Sir Robert at a time when his vote was wanted by the Government, would not have felt himself aggrieved unless he had discovered a 500*l.* bank-note secreted in the folds of his dinner-napkin. It was even admitted by Sir Robert Walpole himself, that there were only three members of the House of Lords, of whose "price" he was ignorant.† Indeed so shamelessly was the trade of corruption carried on, that even so late as the accession of George the Third, we find the borough of Sudbury, in Suffolk, actually advertised as to be sold to the highest bidder.‡

That these were crying evils, which required a stringent remedy, there are few persons perhaps who will feel inclined to dispute. That remedy, as Lord Macaulay points out, clearly

* Quarterly Review vol. 90, p. 511.

† Dr. King's Anecdotes of his own Time, p. 44, 2nd Edition.

‡ Sudbury escaped the proscription of 1832, but was subsequently disfranchised in 1844.—See *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. i. p. 42.

lay in a sweeping reform of the representative system; in a wholesome extension of the elective suffrage, and in throwing open the doors of Parliament to the reporters for the public journals; thus allowing the constituent bodies to learn on which side of a question their representatives spoke and voted. As yet, however, neither Whigs nor Tories were prepared to advocate so enlightened a policy. The Court, on the other hand, was prepared with a remedy of its own. To emancipate the new Sovereign from the humiliating thraldom in which his grandfather and great-grandfather had been kept by the great Whig Lords, to render the Crown in future respectable and respected, and to restore to the Tory party a fair, if not dominant share, of political influence, were among the first principles which George the Third had imbibed from the advisers of his youth. The young King, be it remembered, had been early and deeply impregnated with the brilliant fallacies of that fantastic political school of which Lord Bolingbroke may be said to have been the founder. That school not only held up to reprobation the overgrown tyranny of the Whig party, but proposed to restore to the Crown the powers which had been usurped by the "Great Families." The King of Great Britain, argued Bolingbroke and his proselytes, ought to be the King of his people and not the King of Whigs and Tories; he ought to be alike the supreme chief, as well as the friend and father of his people; he was in fact to be a "Patriot King;" his principal duties should consist in setting his face against all political factions; in selecting as his Ministers, independent of their being Whigs or Tories, the wisest, the most upright, and the most experienced statesmen of his time; and lastly, in maintaining the purity of Parliament, and trampling bribery and corruption under foot.*

* Sir Joseph Yorke writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell, shortly after the King's accession :—"In what way the new Parliament will be chosen we shall soon see. I hear the fashion at Court is to say, it shall be a Parliament of the people's own choosing;

Theoretically speaking, these hypotheses were plausible enough. Practically speaking, they were fraught with imminent peril to the State. Had they unhappily been carried into effect, the proper balance of power between King, Lords, and Commons, would have been at an end. The standard axiom, "*Vox populi, vox Dei*," would have become a dead letter. That the young King, in adopting the Utopian fallacies of the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute, proposed to extend the royal Prerogative beyond the limits prescribed by his Coronation oath, and much more that he deliberately contemplated the enslavement of his people, we are far from being inclined to believe. But, on the other hand, admitting him to have possessed all the good intentions and all the virtues requisite to constitute a perfect "Patriot King," where was the guarantee that his successors would practise a similar forbearance? It is not often that a Marcus Aurelius succeeds to an Antoninus Pius. That a vast amount of political profligacy and corruption would have been swept away can scarcely be doubted; but, on the other hand, had the Court carried its point, there was the risk of incurring a despotism as intolerable as that which had existed in the days when Strafford and Archbishop Laud delivered their hateful judgments in the Star Chamber at Westminster, and cut off the ears of far better citizens than themselves.

In the mean time, the majority of the Whigs, confident in their own long-established power, appear to have awaited with curiosity, rather than alarm, the development of the new political system. Lord Bute they regarded, or affected to regard, with the profoundest contempt. That a Scottish Representative peer—who had not only never served any official apprenticeship under the State, but who was also unconnected with the great English Whig lords by the ties

which, in these times, may open the door to new cabals and difficulties, though the principle of it may be wise and honest."—*Chatham Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 83, *note*.

of blood or family interest—should have the presumption to enter the lists against them, was a contingency which was long in forcing itself upon their convictions. Moreover, least of all men could Pitt have imagined that, in the height of his power and popularity, he was destined to be thrust on one side, in order to make room for one whom he regarded as a mere pedantic Groom of the Stole, a led captain of the Princess Dowager, the mere fortunate hanger-on of a Court. In former days, when Pitt had held the appointment of Groom of the Bedchamber to Frederick Prince of Wales, he and Bute had doubtless been thrown a good deal into each other's society. For some time, however, as we learn from Horace Walpole, they had "been on the coldest terms."*

Deep as was the interest which the young King took in passing political events, he was not the less predisposed to be influenced by the romantic feelings which are natural to youth. His passion for the fair Quakeress, Hannah Lightfoot, had passed away. A nobler-born, and perhaps lovelier girl, had taken her place in his heart.

Lady Sarah Lennox, the lady alluded to, was the youngest daughter of Charles, second Duke of Richmond. At the period when she captivated her Sovereign, she was only in her seventeenth year. Her contemporaries not only unanimously accord her the meed of surpassing loveliness, but assign to her a bewitching fascination of manner, which is said to have characterised her even in extreme old age. "Lady Sarah Lennox," writes Horace Walpole in describing the fair forms which subsequently walked in the nuptial train of Charlotte of Mecklenburg—"was by far the chief angel." † And again, in chronicling her performance of the part of Jane Shore at some private theatricals at Holland House, he writes—"Lady Sarah was in white, with her hair about her ears,

* Reign of George the Third, vol. i. p. 10.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. 3, p. 433.

and on the ground. No Magdalen by Correggio was ever half so lovely and expressive." *

As may be readily imagined, the King's predilection for this beautiful girl could not long be kept a secret from the lynx-eyed denizens of a Court. The laws of England opposed no obstacle to their union, and accordingly the most ambitious hopes began to be entertained by the House of Lennox. On the other hand, the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute were thrown into a corresponding state of consternation. Whenever the King and Lady Sarah were together, it was evident that Lord Bute was under orders to interrupt their *tête-à-tête* conversations. So little control, indeed, had the Princess over her feelings, that more than once she is said to have thrust herself in Lady Sarah's way, and to have burst out into an offensive laugh in her face. What provision, indeed, could she expect for her children—what consideration could she hope for for herself—in the event of the King becoming a cipher in the hands of a lovely girl and her aspiring relatives?

The family of Lady Sarah Lennox, and especially her ambitious brother-in-law, Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, missed no opportunity of throwing her in the King's way. So long as the Court remained in London, so long was Lady Sarah detained at Holland House, the proximity of which to St. James's was a favourable circumstance for the intriguers. There, on the fine summer mornings, in the broad meadow which lies in front of that interesting old mansion, Lady Sarah, attired in a half-fancy costume, resembling a peasant's, was to be seen gracefully taking her share in the labours of the haymakers. Thither likewise, on those fine mornings, the King was to be seen directing his horse's head, in the hope of finding an opportunity of exchanging a few words with the object of his affections, who doubtless greeted her

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 374.

royal admirer with her sweetest smiles. The King was young and handsome, and Lady Sarah—notwithstanding she is said to have been in love at the time with Lord Newbottle, afterwards Marquis of Lothian—had no objection to become a Queen.*

The fourth of June, 1761—the first anniversary of the King's birth since his accession—was kept by him with considerable magnificence. On that day, amidst the brilliant company which he had assembled at St. James's, Lady Sarah was the observed of all observers. "The birthday," writes Horace Walpole to Lady Ailesbury, "exceeded the splendour of Haroun Alraschid and the 'Arabian Nights,' when people had nothing to do but to scour a lantern and send a genie for a hamper of diamonds and rubies. Do you remember one of those stories where a prince has eight statues of diamonds, which he overlooks because he fancies he wants a ninth, and, to his great surprise, the ninth proves to be pure flesh and blood, which he never thought of? † Somehow or other, Lady Sarah is the ninth statue; and, you will allow, has better white and red than if she was made of pearls and rubies." ‡

The King would seem to have made but little secret of his passion. His confidante was Lady Susan Strangways, Lady Sarah's friend and kinswoman. § According to an account of the King's attachment which, more than six years

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 63, 64, 66, and 67. Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 37. Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 209.

† See the beautiful story in the "Arabian Nights" of Prince Zeyn Alasman and the King of the Genii.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 405.

§ Lady Susannah Sarah Louisa Strangways, daughter of Stephen, first Earl of Ilchester, and niece to Mr. Fox, was at this period in her nineteenth year. In April, 1764, she married William O'Brien, a popular actor. "A melancholy affair," writes Walpole, "has happened to Lord Ilchester. His eldest daughter, Lady Susan, a very pleasing girl, though not handsome, married herself two days ago at Covent Garden Church, to O'Brien, a handsome young actor. Lord Ilchester doated on her, and was the most indulgent of fathers. 'Tis a cruel blow."—*Walpole's Letters*, vol. iv. pp. 119-120.

afterwards, Mr. Thomas Pitt related to George Grenville—"His Majesty came to Lady Susan Strangways in the Drawing Room, asked her in a whisper if she did not think the Coronation [would be] a much finer sight if there was a Queen. She said 'Yes.' He then asked her if she did not know somebody who would grace that ceremony in the properest manner. At this she was much embarrassed, thinking he meant herself: but he went on and said—'I mean your friend, Lady Sarah Lennox. Tell her so; and let me have her answer the next Drawing Room day.'" * Lady Susan happening, on one occasion, to mention that she was about to leave London—"I hope not," said the King; and immediately afterwards he added;—"But you return in the summer for the Coronation?"—"I hope so, Sir," replied Lady Susan. "But," continued the King, "they talk of a wedding. There have been many proposals, but I think an English match would do better than a foreign one. *Pray tell Lady Sarah I say so.*" No wonder, after such conversations, that the hopes of Lady Sarah and of her family should have been raised to the highest pitch.

A marriage, however, between George the Third and the loveliest of his subjects was not an event which was destined to take place. "It is well known," writes Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "that before his marriage the King distinguished by his partiality Lady Sarah Lennox, then one of the most beautiful young women of high rank in the kingdom. Edward the Fourth or Henry the Eighth, in his situation, would have married and placed her on the throne. Charles the Second, more licentious, would have endeavoured to seduce her. But the King, who, though he admired her, neither desired to make her his wife nor his mistress, subdued his passion by the strength of his reason, his principles, and his sense of public

* Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 209.

duty."* That George the Third had no *desire* to marry Lady Sarah was certainly not the case. Indeed, there cannot be a doubt but that it was the ardent wish of his heart to make her his wife. Exercising, however, that admirable command over his passions, which more than once distinguished him during the difficulties of his subsequent career, he resolved on rendering the gratification of his desires dependent upon the interests of his subjects, and subsequently succeeded in alienating himself from her society.

Jealousy of Lord Newbottle—according to the further account in the Grenville Papers—was another cause of the King breaking off with Lady Sarah, and of his offering his hand to Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz. "Whilst this was in agitation," writes Mr. Grenville, "Lady Sarah used to meet the King in his rides early in the morning, driving a little chaise with Lady Susan Strangways; and once, it is said, that wanting to speak to him, she went dressed like a servant-maid, and stood amongst the crowd in the Guard Room, to say a few words to him as he passed by." In Mr. Grenville's further words, Lady Sarah, at one and the same time, "found herself deprived of a Crown and of her lover Lord Newbottle, who complained as much of her, as she did of the King." †

Of the passion of George the Third for Lady Sarah Lennox, the few particulars that remain to be told, may be here related. Of the ten unmarried daughters of Dukes and Earls who were subsequently the bridesmaids to Charlotte of Mecklenburg on her marriage with the King, Lady Sarah was one; her friend, Lady Susan Strangways, another. During the ceremony the courtiers watched the countenance of the King, which, however, betrayed no emotion, till the Archbishop of Canterbury came to the words in the Marriage Service—"And as Thou didst send Thy blessing upon Abraham and Sarah to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send

* Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 37.
† Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 210.

Thy blessing upon these Thy servants"—when the King's uneasiness was perceptible to every one. Not less embarrassing to him was an incident which occurred at the Drawing Room on the following day. Among the persons who appeared for presentation was John, Earl of Westmoreland, who in his youth had fought under the great Marlborough, but who was now advanced in years and afflicted with partial blindness.* Unluckily he chanced to mistake Lady Sarah for her royal mistress, and was only prevented kneeling and doing homage to her, by the prompt interference of the bystanders.†

The depth of the King's attachment to Lady Sarah Lennox cannot admit of a doubt. Many years afterwards, he happened to attend the theatre during one of the performances of the charming actress, Mrs. Pope, who, both in face and manner, was thought to bear a strong resemblance to Lady Sarah. The events of days gone by rushed back to his memory; the presence of the Queen was forgotten, and, in a moment of melancholy abstraction, he was heard to murmur to himself:—"*She is like Lady Sarah still!*" Lady Sarah, it may be mentioned, married first, on the 2nd of June, 1762, Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, Bart., who in our own time figured so conspicuously as the patron and father of the Turf; and secondly, in 1781, the Hon. George Napier, by whom she became the mother of Sir William Napier, the author of the History of the Peninsular War, and of his not less distinguished brother, Sir Charles. Her death took place on the 20th of August 1826, in the eighty-second year of her age. During the last years of her life she was completely blind; an infliction which she endured with the most exemplary cheerfulness and resignation to the will of Providence. Lady Sarah was great-grand-daughter—perhaps the last surviving one—of Charles the Second.

* The Earl died on the 26th of August, the following year.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 66, 67.

CHAPTER V.

The Princess Dowager's efforts to preserve her influence on the King's mind—Bute's political intrigues—Changes in the Government, and accession of Bute to office as Secretary of State—Weakness of the Whig party, owing to dissensions among the "Great Families"——Career of William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham—Success of Pitt's policy as Secretary of State and War Minister—His efficiency as an administrator—Public confidence in his abilities and patriotism—His personal influence in the House of Commons and the Cabinet—Pitt's opposition to the Bourbon "Family Compact" defeated by Bute—Fall of Pitt—His popularity impaired by his acceptance of a peerage for his wife and a pension for himself—His emotion on delivering the Seals of Office to the King.

In the mean time, the Princess Dowager, elated at the successful result of her opposition to the King's marriage with Lady Sarah Lennox, was quietly pursuing her favourite project of obtaining a paramount influence over the mind of her son; while Lord Bute, on his part, was no less deeply intent on maturing measures for driving the Whigs from power, and procuring his own aggrandisement in the event of their fall. During the first five months of the King's reign, the Earl had contented himself with being sworn a Privy Councillor and holding the subordinate post of Groom of the Stole; but the time, in his opinion, had now arrived when a blow might be struck at the "Great Families" with impunity. Accordingly, as a preliminary measure, the King, by the Earl's advice, was induced to dismiss from the
March 22. post of Chancellor of the Exchequer an efficient statesman, Henry Bilson Legge, a younger son of William, first Earl of Dartmouth, who, in addition to being a Whig, appears to have given other, and graver offence to the Court. For instance when, on delivering up the Seals to the King in the royal closet, he happened to intimate that his future life should testify to

his zeal for his Majesty's service—"I am glad of it—" replied the King, "for nothing but your future life can eradicate the ill impressions which I have received of you." * The post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, vacated by Legge, was forthwith filled up by William, Viscount Barrington, at this time Secretary at War, whose removal from that situation made room for the celebrated Charles Townshend.

These changes were followed, only three days afterwards, by another and far more important arrangement, the removal of the Earl of Holderness from the post of Secretary of State, and the appointment of Lord Bute in his room. The excuse given for the dismissal of Lord Holderness was his incapacity; a charge which would seem to have been not altogether undeserved. The King even included Pitt in the reprehensions which escaped him on this occasion. "I have two Secretaries of State," he said; "one who *can* do nothing, and one who *will* do nothing." "As if," observes Walpole significantly, "subduing Europe was to be reckoned nothing!" † March 25.

That the great Whig lords should not only have submitted without a struggle to these significant changes, but that more than one of them should have actually recommended Lord Bute to the King for the office of Secretary of State, ‡ appears, on first reflection, to be almost

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 49.—"I esteem and love Legge," writes Mr. Pitt in one of his letters to Earl Temple.—*Grenville Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 120. Mr. Legge had been three times Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in February, 1748, was appointed Envoy Extraordinary to the King of Prussia. His death took place on the 21st of August, 1764. "Old Sir John Barnard is dead, which he has been for some time," writes Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, "and Mr. Legge. The latter, who was heartily in the Minority, said cheerfully before he died, 'that he was going to the Majority.'"—*Letters*, vol. iv. p. 264. Another dying pleasantry of Mr. Legge's is related by Gilly Williams in a letter to George Selwyn. "Mr. Legge," writes the former, "told a very fat fellow who came to see him the day before he died, 'Sir, you are a great weight, but let me tell you you are in at the death.'"—*Selwyn Correspondence*, vol. i. pp. 295—6. With reference to the causes of Legge's dismissal, see *History of the late Minority*, pp. 17, &c., and *note*.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 43.

‡ The King told Rose in 1804 that it was owing to the solicitations of the Dukes

incomprehensible. Certainly the game, had they chosen to play it out, would seem to have been entirely in their hands. Lord Bute, it should be borne in mind, was at the head of no party in the State; his manners were cold and ungracious; he was without the advantage of political experience and, although he was in his forty-eighth year, he had never once, we believe, risen to speak in Parliament. Previously to the present reign his name had been unknown beyond the precincts of the Court, and since then, owing to his having been a Scotchman, a Tory, and a Favourite, it had become familiar only to be reprobated. On the other hand, Ministers were backed by the vast wealth and enormous Borough interest of the great Whig party; the secret service-money was at their disposal; the Church and State, in consequence of their long tenure of office, were filled with their creatures and partisans; and, lastly, they had the advantages of the commanding talents and unbounded popularity of Pitt.

But unfortunately, the "Great Families" had become more than ever divided amongst themselves. The powerful Russell and Pelham factions had ceased to be allies; the Duke of Rutland was dissatisfied with his office of Steward of the Household; the Duke of Bedford was angry at General Conway having been selected to command in Germany, in preference to General Waldegrave; the Duke of Newcastle was stealthily intriguing to get Mr. Pitt out of the Ministry; and lastly, Fox was more than suspected of being engaged in a plot to turn out Newcastle.

Another subject of disagreement among the Whig leaders was the policy of continuing or discontinuing the war. To Pitt personally this was a question of the most lively interest. A period of warfare, which, to the great majority of official

of Newcastle and Devonshire, that he had been induced to consent to Lord Bute's appointment as Secretary of State.—*Rose's Diaries*, vol. ii. pp. 191, 192. According also to the King's sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, the persons who most eagerly pressed Lord Bute upon the King at this time were the Duke of Devonshire and the Marquis of Rockingham.—*Lord Malmesbury's Diaries*, vol. iii. p. 158.

men is naturally a source of inquietude, was to Pitt a season of pleasurable excitement. It was the late war, with its long series of triumphs by sea and land, which had rendered his name illustrious over the world; peace, moreover, at this period, he believed to be diametrically opposed to the interests of his country, and accordingly in the Cabinet he brought all his eloquence and all his influence into play in support of the continuance of hostilities.

On the side of Pitt were arrayed his brothers-in-law, Lord Temple and James Grenville; while, on the other hand, the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Hardwicke, George Grenville, and Fox, were as strenuously in favour of peace. As regarded the public in general, the lower classes—grateful to Pitt for the exhilarating spectacles which he had so often afforded them of French banners carried in triumph to St. Paul's, and French cannon dragged to the Tower—appear to have been almost unanimously in favour of war, while, among the upper and middle classes, opinion seems to have been more nearly divided. At all events, a large portion of the community—composed in part of persons who were moved by reason and conviction, and in part of those who held the opinion of Franklin that a bad peace is preferable to no peace at all—was anxious by any safe and honourable means to bring the war to a close. The Treasury, argued the peacemakers, had become very nearly drained by the enormous cost of the war; the armies of France had been routed in every quarter; her resources were very nearly exhausted; and accordingly now—they said—was the proper and propitious moment for Great Britain to dictate terms to her humbled enemy.

It was on the support of the powerful peace party that Bute, in a great measure, relied for the success of his double and daring design of ejecting the Whigs from power, and introducing into the political system his own notions of good government and good laws. The chief obstacle that stood

in his way was Pitt. It was calculated with much reason by Bute, that could Pitt be either induced or forced to retire from the Government, peace would become a measure of comparatively easy accomplishment; that with the cessation of hostilities much of the influence and popularity of that illustrious man would necessarily cease; that the present Government, of which Pitt's genius, eloquence, and virtues were the mainstays, might then with little difficulty be overthrown; that Bute's own elevation to the Premiership would be the almost certain consequence of that event; that, by bringing a long and costly war to an honourable close he should earn the gratitude, and establish himself in the affections, of his fellow-countrymen; and lastly, that enjoying, as he did, the full confidence and support of his Sovereign, he should be enabled to render his administration a durable as well as a popular one.

Bute, it is needless to say, accomplished his object of becoming first Minister of the Crown, but it was by means singularly impolitic. Instead of entering, as he did, into personal rivalry with the greatest statesman of his age; instead of forcing his own incapacity and insignificance into glaring contrast with the brilliant genius of his antagonist; instead of making a martyr of Pitt by driving him from an office which he had filled with a skill and success beyond all former precedent, Bute should have patiently waited, and watched the progress of events. So unnatural an alliance as that which existed between Pitt and Newcastle promised to be of no very long continuance. Newcastle, moreover, was advanced in years; Pitt was a martyr to disease. Death, therefore, might remove the one: increased infirmities might incapacitate the other. Greatly as Pitt was loved by his countrymen, a single defeat, or even a doubtful victory, might rob him of his popularity. Bute, however, was fated to commit a series of irreparable errors. True it is that he contrived to achieve a temporary triumph, but it

was destined to be dearly purchased by the disgrace and danger which accompanied his fall. When Pitt fell, it was with the proud satisfaction of knowing that he still filled as large a space in the affections of his countrymen as in the days when, in the midst of storm and tempest, Hawke swept the French fleet from the waters in Quiberon Bay, or when the British standard first floated in triumph on the citadel of Quebec. Far different was the fall of Bute. When *he* fell, it was with the miserable conviction that his blunders had entailed on his Sovereign an amount of unpopularity, and on himself a degree of popular hatred, such as will be found rarely paralleled in the annals of Court Favouritism.

William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, was born in 1708. He was educated at Eton, and afterwards at Utrecht* and at Trinity College, Oxford. After having served a short period in the army, as a cornet in the "Blues," he obtained a seat in Parliament, in 1735, as member for Old Sarum. In the House of Commons, his abilities and oratorical powers speedily rendered him eminent. In 1746, he was appointed Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and afterwards Paymaster-General of the Forces, and in 1756, George the Second, yielding to the universal outcry of the nation, delivered to him the seals as Secretary of State.

At this period Great Britain had been reduced almost to the lowest ebb of national degradation. For a considerable time past, defeat had been followed by defeat, and disaster by disaster. The unfortunate expedition of General Braddock against Fort Duquesne; the unsuccessful attempt against Ticonderoga; the failure of the expedition against Rochefort, and the unsatisfactory result of the naval engagement

* The fact of Lord Chatham having received a part of his education at the University of Utrecht has apparently not been noticed by any of his biographers. He himself, however, records the fact in a letter to the Earl of Shelburne, dated October 12, 1766.—*Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 107, and note.

between Admiral Byng and Galissonière, had alike grievously tarnished the public honour, and fiercely exasperated the people of England against their leaders. It was under these circumstances that England demanded the services of Pitt as the wisest, the most eloquent, and one of the most virtuous of her sons. The wisdom of the selection was very shortly made manifest. Scarcely had Pitt taken the helm before the tide of national ignominy rolled back. As if with the wand of a magician, he stirred up the spirit of a gallant people; in every part of the globe success attended the British arms; the fleets which had formerly threatened England were swept from the seas; before the close of the war no fewer than thirty-six sail-of-the-line, fifty frigates, and forty-five sloops-of-war had been either captured or destroyed; France and Spain had been humiliated, and Canada and half of Hindostan had been added to the territorial possessions of Great Britain. Mr. Pitt, in fact, lived to see England the most powerful nation in Europe, and his own name dreaded over the world. "*Il faut avouer*," said Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, "*que l'Angleterre a été long-tems en travail, et qu'elle a beaucoup soufferte pour produire M. Pitt; mais enfin elle est accouchée d'un homme.*"*

Despite of a few foibles, Pitt was a great man. He possessed a mind singularly fertile in resources; a perception as clear in devising expedients as he was prompt in carrying them into execution; an undaunted courage which never shrank from incurring responsibility; an originality of genius which led him to despise precedents, and to regard as trifling hindrances such obstacles as to inferior intellects appeared to be impossibilities; and lastly, he possessed a mind superior to all selfish considerations. To him the smiles or frowns of his Sovereign, the applause or censure of the multitude, the loss of office or the tenure of power,

* Chatham Corresp., vol. i. pp. 444-5.

were as nothing compared with the one noble and all-absorbing object of his life—the aggrandisement and prosperity of his native country. In the noblest sense of the word he was a patriot. He loved his country, and in the dark hours of her declining grandeur is said to have been impressed with the prophetic conviction that he was destined to save her. "My Lord," he once said to the Duke of Devonshire, "I am sure that I can save this country, and that nobody else can."

Pitt had no sooner been installed as Secretary of State and War Minister, than he began to establish a severe despotism over every naval and military department of the State. He not only exacted obedience from those who served under him, but prompt, tacit, implicit obedience. In the different offices connected with the War Department, not only the Under-Secretaries and the heads of departments, but even the subordinate clerks, were taught to feel that they were under the eye of a severe taskmaster—one who was almost as conversant with their duties as they were themselves. On one occasion, when confined to his bed by the gout, he sent a message to the Master-General of the Ordnance, Sir Charles Frederick, to attend him immediately. "The battering-train from the Tower," he told him, "must be at Portsmouth by to-morrow morning at seven o'clock." The Master-General attempted to explain to him that it was impossible. "At your peril, sir," said the great Minister, "let it be done; and let an express be sent to me from every stage till the train arrives." By seven o'clock the train was at Portsmouth.*

Over the minds of such naval and military men as were brought into communication with him, Pitt acquired a still more remarkable influence. The dignity of his demeanour, the grandeur of his views, and the clearness with which he

* Seward's Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons, vol. ii. p. 364, note, Fifth Edition.

explained them, impressed them at once with the conviction that they were in the presence of a great man. When they left him to obey his orders in a foreign land, they felt that he had instilled into them a portion of his own sanguine and indomitable spirit; that they were about to serve under the eye of one who had both the genius to appreciate great deeds, and the power and generosity to reward them; that his clear and piercing eye would be ever upon them; that they would receive from him every assistance and encouragement which a commander could expect from his employer; that their glory would be his glory; that though he might forgive rashness and want of judgment, he would never pardon over-caution; that in his eyes adventurous gallantry was a virtue, and timidity a crime. Civilian though he was, they felt that the ablest commander might not only obey his instructions without a blush, but adopt his suggestions with advantage. "He was possessed," said Colonel Barré on one occasion in the House of Commons, "of the happy talent of transfusing his own zeal into the souls of all those who were to have a share in carrying his projects into execution; and it is a matter well known to many officers now in the House, that no man ever entered the Earl's closet who did not feel himself, if possible, braver at his return than when he went in."* To those who were employed by him he ever extended his fullest support. A general officer having on one occasion been asked by Pitt what number of men he would require to enable him to succeed in carrying out a certain expedition, the reply was—"Ten thousand." "Then you shall have twelve thousand," said the Minister, "and if you do not succeed it will be your own fault."†— "To push expense," he once said in defending the Army Estimates, "is the best policy." "The war," writes Lady Hervey, "has cost us a great deal, it is true; but then we

* Speech, May 13, 1778: *Parliamentary History*, vol. xix. p. 1227.
† Seward's Anecdotes, vol. ii. pp. 362-3.

have had success and honour for our money. Before Mr. Pitt came in we spent vast sums only to purchase disgrace and infamy." * Irresolution—that weakness so often fatal to the reputation of eminent men and to the success of great measures—it was not in his nature to feel, nor was he ready to pardon it in others. "Irresolution," once observed his rival, Henry Fox, "has been a general and is surely a fatal fault. I think Pitt almost the only man that I have seen in power who had not that fault, though he had many others." †

Thus by degrees did Pitt instil his own adventurous and undaunted spirit, his own love of country, and his own passion for glory and confidence of success, not only into the breasts of every naval and military commander, but into that of each soldier of the army and each sailor in the fleet. No minister of this country was ever served with such promptitude and cheerfulness. That he was, to a great extent, indebted for the success of his measures to the large supplies of money which his countrymen placed at his disposal, there can be no question. Fully sensible of the false economy of waging cheap wars; of the folly and cruelty of sending out insufficient numbers of men, defective artillery, and half-manned ships, he was resolved that, so long as he remained War Minister of England, no single individual, either in the army or the navy, should plead want of sufficient support as an excuse for failure or defeat. Moreover, whenever he had an enterprise in contemplation, he ever selected the individual whom he believed to be the most competent to achieve success. The patronage which accrues to Office he gave up to his country. For the claims of political friends, or the pleadings of pretty women, he had no ear. For high family connexion and its pretensions he entertained the profoundest contempt.

* Lady Hervey's Letters, p. 282.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 58.

Nobly, indeed, did "the Great Commoner"—as his countrymen loved to style him *—concentrate his energies, his talents, and his virtues, to restore the fallen credit of his country. Nobly did he conduct towards a glorious conclusion a war which, had it been managed by a statesman of inferior genius, might have been protracted for twenty years longer at tenfold the expense, and probably with a tenth only of the success with which it was crowned. So invariable indeed, under the auspices of Pitt, became the trumph of the British arms, that during the later encounters between England and her foes, the one, when they met, looked for victory as a matter of course, while the other appeared already panic-struck by the prospect of defeat. "There is scarcely more credit to be got," said a contemporary, "in beating a Frenchman than in beating a woman."

The influence which Pitt exercised over the minds of his countrymen was nowhere more remarkably displayed than in the House of Commons. Its members, forced to acquiesce in the supremacy of his genius, accepted him as a dictator in everything except in name. The deference which they paid him was manifested, not only in the vast sums which they voted him without inquiry and without a murmur, but also in the awe in which each individually stood of his impassioned denunciations and withering taunts. On one occasion, it is said, a Member, somewhat bolder than his fellows, arose to prefer a charge of inconsistency against the great Minister. Pitt fixed on him a single look of mingled astonishment and scorn. That single look was sufficient. After having muttered a few unintelligible words, the unfortunate man gladly resumed his seat, and his insignificance.

* The appellation of "the Great Commoner" was not originally given *to* Pitt, but *by* Pitt to the eminent citizen and senator, Sir John Barnard.—*Seward's Anecdotes*, vol. ii. p. 353.

The confidence in Pitt's genius and patriotism which pervaded the Army, the Navy, and the Senate, was equalled if not surpassed by the love and veneration with which he was regarded by the masses of the People. They loved him, not only because he had provided them with conquests and triumphs, instead of humiliation and defeat—not only because under his auspices the commerce of England had kept pace with her ancient military renown—but because he was also the "Great Commoner," the Minister of their own creation and choice, because it was his boast that he derived his power, not from the favour of Kings, but from the middle classes of his countrymen, and, lastly, because—notwithstanding the vast services which he had conferred on the State—notwithstanding he had rendered himself the terror of France and the admiration of Europe—he was still simply Mr. Pitt, without a sinecure, and above a bribe; without a Garter upon his knee, or even a riband across his breast.

In the Cabinet, as elsewhere, Pitt's ascendancy was paramount; so much so, indeed, that latterly he appears to have manifested an assumption of superiority in his intercourse with his colleagues, which amounted almost to rudeness. On one occasion, for instance, we find the Duke of Newcastle groaning at his bullying propensities, and at another time Lord Bute complaining of the insolent treatment which he had experienced from him. To Rigby, Newcastle freely admitted "the dread the whole Council used to be in, lest Mr. Pitt should frown." *

Such was the statesman whose eminent services the King and Lord Bute proposed to dispense with at the earliest convenient opportunity. Pitt, who had witnessed the dismissal of Legge with satisfaction, and even the removal of Holderness without alarm, began at last to perceive that the days of his own official existence were numbered. The

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 6, 19, 56. See also Sir George Colebrooke's Memoirs, quoted in Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. 1, pp. 80, 81, note.

growing influence of Bute in the Cabinet, the coldness of the King's manner towards himself, the removal of more than one of his colleagues, and the intrigues and desertion of others, would probably ere long have induced him to throw up the Seals, when the following events occurred which left him no choice but to tender his resignation.

France, weakened and humiliated, had induced Charles the Third, King of Spain, to join with her in a secret treaty, known afterwards by the name of the "Family Compact," by which the two Princes of the House of Bourbon engaged to make common cause against England. By some means or other Pitt had become cognisant of the treaty, and accordingly he proposed, by the immediate adoption of certain vigorous measures, to anticipate the hostile intentions of Spain. It was his earnest advice to the Cabinet that orders should be forthwith despatched to the Earl of Bristol, the British ambassador at Madrid, instructing him to demand a sight of the treaty, and, in the event of the requisition not being acceded to, that war should immediately be declared against Spain. Moreover, simultaneously with this bold stroke of policy, he proposed that a fleet, consisting of not less than twelve or fourteen sail-of-the-line, should at once be despatched to Cadiz. To use his own words—"I submitted to a trembling Council my advice for an immediate declaration of war with Spain." * Had this advice been followed Pitt would in all probability have earned fresh laurels for himself, and laid his country under deeper obligations than ever. Spain might have lost her American fleet and its golden cargoes; Havannah, Martinique, and the Philippine Islands would probably have been at the mercy of Great Britain.

But Bute was now all-powerful in the Cabinet, and accordingly he was not only the first person to raise his voice against the measures proposed by Pitt, but had even the

* Debate in the House of Lords, November 22, 1770, Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. col. 1094.

temerity to denounce them as "rash and unadvisable." Lord Temple alone of all the Ministers warmly supported the policy of his illustrious brother-in-law. The remainder —some of them from timidity, some perhaps from motives of envy and self-interest, and others from doubting, or affecting to doubt, the authenticity of Pitt's information—recorded their votes against their despotic colleague. Pitt therefore had no choice but to resign. He was grateful—he said at the Council-table—to those Members of the Cabinet who had given him their support during the war. As for himself, he added, he had been called to the Ministry by the voice of the People; it was to them that he looked upon himself as responsible, and in justice to them it was impossible for him to continue in a situation which made him answerable for measures over which he had no longer any control. Indignant at the solemn and intrepid deference paid by Pitt to the will of the people, the President of the Council, Earl Granville, rose from his seat. "When the gentleman," he said, "talks of being responsible to the people he talks the language of the House of Commons and forgets that at this Board he is only responsible to the King. However, though he may possibly have convinced himself of his infallibility, still it remains that we should be equally convinced, before we can resign our understandings to his direction, or join with him in the measure he proposes." *

Thus fell Mr. Pitt after having performed greater services for his King and country than ever, before or since, have been rendered by a British statesman. No sooner was it publicly known that he had ceased to be a Minister of the Crown, than the nation, in the words of Walpole, was "thunderstruck, alarmed, indignant." The City of London boldly proposed an address to the King, desiring to be acquainted with the cause of his dismissal. Others suggested a vote of public thanks and condolence to the fallen Oct. 5.

* Annual Register for 1761, pp. 43, 44.

Minister. Many went so far as to propose a general mourning as in a time of national affliction.*

Such was the excited state of the public mind when, only four days after Pitt's resignation, it was announced, to the indignation of many, and to the astonishment of all, that the "Great Commoner" had stooped to accept a peerage for his wife, and a pension of 3000*l.* a year for himself. That so illustrious a statesman, and hitherto so pure a patriot, should have condescended to become a pensioner of the State will probably be ever related of him as a matter of regret. But, after all, that Pitt merited one-half of the obloquy which was cast upon him, may very fairly be questioned. "It is a shame," said Burke, "that any defence should be necessary. What eye cannot distinguish the difference between this, and the exceptional cases of titles and pensions. What Briton, with the smallest sense of honour and gratitude, but must blush for his country if such a man retired unrewarded from the public service, let the motives for that retirement be what they would. It was not possible that his Sovereign should let his eminent services pass unrequited. The sum that was given was undoubtedly inadequate to his merits; and the *quantum* was rather regulated by the moderation of the great mind that received it, than by the liberality of that which bestowed it."† Lord Temple also writes to Wilkes on the 16th of October 1761—"The Duke of Marlborough, Prince Ferdinand, Sir Edward Hawke, &c., &c., did not disdain to receive pecuniary and honorary rewards for *their* services, perhaps of a very inferior kind to the deserts of Mr. Pitt. I think therefore he would have been the most insolent, factious, and ungrateful man living to the King, had he waived an offer of this sort, which binds him to nothing but to love and to honour his Majesty."‡

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 82.

† Annual Register for 1761, p. 48.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 404.

It has been charged against the King and Lord Bute that, in pressing favours upon the fallen Minister, their real and sinister object was to exhibit him in the invidious light of a pensioner and a patrician, and thus rob him of his great popularity with his fellow-countrymen. "The King," writes Walpole, "was advised to heap rewards on his late Minister: the Princess pressed it eagerly."* According to a modern writer whose judgment is of value—"it was an artful stroke of policy, thus at once to conciliate and weaken the popular statesman whose opposition was to be dreaded—and it succeeded." † Such may possibly have been the state of the case, but, at all events, Pitt himself appears to have been the last person to suspect the imposition which, if it had existed, could scarcely have escaped the observation of one so well acquainted with human nature, as well as with party expedients and devices. As regards the grant of a peerage to Lady Chatham, we learn from no less well-informed a person than her brother, George Grenville, that so far from its having been forced upon the retiring Minister, it was "earnestly pressed" by Pitt, and "with great difficulty" acquiesced in by the King; the truth of which statement seems to be borne out by Pitt's own words, in a letter to Bute dated the 7th of October, that he should be, "above all, doubly happy could he see those dearer to him than himself comprehended in his Majesty's monuments of royal approbation and goodness." ‡ Pitt, in fact, was at this time all gratitude for the favours conferred upon him. To the King, personally, he not only expressed himself as sincerely and deeply grateful; but, on delivering up the Seals in the royal closet, was singularly and painfully affected. "Yesterday," writes the Duke of Newcastle to

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 82.
† May's Constitutional History of England, vol. i. p. 18.
‡ See Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 413, and Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 146—152.

the Duke of Bedford on the 6th, "Mr. Pitt waited upon the King, and resigned the Seals. He expressed great concern that he was obliged to take that step from his differences of opinion with all the rest of the Council; that he thought his remaining in office would only create difficulties and altercations in his Majesty's councils, and that *out of office he would do everything in his power to support his Majesty*, and recommended himself to his goodness."* He almost wished, he told the King, that his services had been left unrewarded, in order that, as an entirely independent man, he might have opportunities of showing how deep was his gratitude, how disinterested was his zeal and affection for his Sovereign.† When the young King expressed his regret at losing the services of so able a servant:—"Sir," said Mr. Pitt, "I confess I had but too much reason to expect your Majesty's displeasure: I did not come prepared for this exceeding goodness: pardon me, Sir,—it overpowers,—it oppresses me," and he burst into tears.‡ "Are you not amazed at Mr. Pitt," writes Mrs. Montagu to Mrs. Carter, "for throwing up the Seals just before the meeting of a new Parliament? I pity the young King, who, in the season of life made for cheerfulness, and most exempt from care, has such a weight thrown upon him as the Government at present. Dangers alarm the experienced, but must alarm and terrify the inexperienced."§

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 48.
† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 413.
‡ Burke; Annual Register for 1761, p. 45.
§ Mrs. Montagu's Letters, vol. iv. p. 348.

CHAPTER VI.

Negotiations for the Marriage of the King with Princess Sophia Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz—Episode of the Duke of Roxburgh and Princess Christina—Marriage by proxy at Mecklenburg—Simple manners of the Mecklenburg Court—Preparations in England—Landing of the Princess Charlotte at Harwich—Enthusiastic reception by the populace in London—Wedding at Midnight in St. James's Palace—Antiquated Nuptial observances—Letter of George III. to the King of Prussia—The Coronation in Westminster Abbey—Incidents and omens of the splendid ceremonial.

In the mean time, the King, disappointed in his hopes of sharing his throne with Lady Sarah Lennox, began to seek in other quarters for a suitable consort. Accordingly, one Colonel David Græme, or Graham, was confidentially instructed by him to visit the different Protestant Courts of Germany, for the purpose of reporting on the relative mental and personal accomplishments of the various unmarried Princesses to whom he might succeed in obtaining an introduction. Græme would seem to have discharged his delicate mission with singular tact and judgment. The Princess who pleased him most, and who was thus indebted to him for a sceptre, was Sophia Charlotte, youngest daughter of Lewis Frederick Duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz, at this time in her eighteenth year.

The favourable report of the Princess's person and disposition, which Græme transmitted to St. James's, was subsequently confirmed by the result of inquiries in other quarters; and accordingly he received orders to place in the hands of the Duchess of Mecklenburg a letter from the Princess Dowager of Wales, containing a demand on the part of the King of Great Britain for the hand of her daughter. The

proposal, as may be supposed, was unhesitatingly and gratefully accepted.*

One untoward incident, only, ruffled the even tenor of the negotiation. John Duke of Roxburgh, in the course of his travels, had chanced to pay a visit to Mecklenburg, where he had fallen in love with the Princess Christina, the elder sister of the future Queen of England. As the Duke was handsome, graceful, accomplished, and only in his twenty-first year, it was natural that the young Princess should return his affection; and accordingly, but for the inopportune arrival of Græme, their mutual predilection for each other would in all probability have ended in marriage. Unhappily, it was one of the conditions stipulated for by the Court of St. James's, that the sister of the destined Queen of England should on no account unite herself to a British subject, and consequently the lovers were compelled to forego the happiness which they had promised themselves. It may be mentioned that the Princess and the Duke both died unmarried.†

* Colonel David Græme had formerly not only been a staunch Jacobite, but had been deeply implicated in the plots to restore the House of Stuart to the throne. Alluding to this circumstance, on his return Hume, the historian, wittily congratulated him on having exchanged the dangerous employment of making Kings, for the more lucrative trade of making Queens.—*Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. i. p. 65. Of the personal history of Colonel Græme, almost as little appears to be known as of the qualifications which led to his being selected to conduct this peculiarly delicate mission. Shortly after the arrival of the young Queen in England, Rigby writes to the Duke of Bedford:—"Eleven new regiments are ordered to be raised; Grahame, the Queen's secretary, to have one."—*Bedford Correspondence*, vol. iii. p. 53. His subsequent commissions bore date:—Major-General, July 10, 1763; Lieutenant-General, May 26, 1772; and General, February 9, 1783. In 1761 he was appointed Secretary to Queen Charlotte, and in 1765 Controller of her Household; both of which appointments he held till 1774.—*Beatson's Political Index*, vol. i. p. 453, vol ii. p. 120. The Rev. A. Carlyle, who was thrown into General Græme's society in 1769, intimates that he was at that time partially under a cloud at Court, on account of "tampering with her Majesty, and using political freedoms which were not long afterwards the cause of his disgrace."—"Colonel Graham," he continues, "was a shrewd and sensible man; but the Queen's favour and his prosperity had made him arrogant and presumptuous, and he blew himself up. Not long after this time he lost his office near the Queen, and retired into obscurity in Scotland for the rest of his days."—*Autobiography*, pp. 515—6. General Græme died in 1797.

† John third Duke of Roxburgh, from whose "Bibliotheca" the Roxburgh Club

With so much secrecy had the negotiations for the King's marriage been conducted that, with the exception of the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute, there was perhaps no individual in England who suspected that such an event was in contemplation. At length, however, at the commencement of July, the interesting secret was confidentially communicated by Lord Bute to the Dukes of Bedford and Newcastle, Lord Hardwicke, and Mr. Pitt. To the Duke of Bedford, Bute writes on the 3rd of that month:—"The very great regard I have for your Grace has made me quite uneasy till I obtained his Majesty's permission to communicate to you the business of the Council to which your Grace is summoned on Wednesday next. I do it, my Lord, under the seal of the strictest secrecy. The King intends that day to declare his resolution of taking a consort to his bed. The lady pitched upon to be our future Queen is the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz; one whose character appears everything we could wish, and that not taken upon very slight grounds." * The Council referred to by Lord Bute had been summoned for the 8th of July, for the despatch of "*the most urgent and important business;*" and accordingly, on that day—to the surprise of most of the members, who had anticipated the discussion of graver topics than a marriage—the King apprised them that his hand had been accepted by a foreign Princess, and that the youngest daughter of the House of Mecklenburg Strelitz was to be their Queen. † "Perhaps," writes Walpole, "there were not six men in England who knew that such a Princess existed." Again, Walpole writes:—"The handkerchief has been tossed a vast way. It is to a Charlotte,

afterwards took its rise, was born in 1740. His attachment to the Princess Christina is mentioned in the newspapers of the day. He afterwards became a great favourite with George the Third, was appointed a Lord of the Bedchamber in 1767, and Groom of the Stole in 1796. He died on the 19th of March, 1804.

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 17, 18, 20..

† Annual Register for 1761, pp. 205, 206.

Princess of Mecklenburg. Lord Harcourt is to be at her father's Court, *if he can find it*, on the 1st of August, and the coronation of both their Majesties is fixed for the 22nd of September." *

It was not till the negotiations for the hand of the Princess had been entirely completed, that she was made acquainted with the brilliant destiny which awaited her, and then under circumstances of considerable interest, which, a few years afterwards, she herself related to an accomplished lady for whom she entertained a high esteem and regard. "In the latter years of Queen Charlotte's life"—writes the lady referred to—† "I used often to spend some days at the Castle, and in one of these visits heard her Majesty describe her own wedding. She described her life at Mecklenburg as one of extreme retirement. They dressed only *en robe de chambre* except on Sundays, on which day she put on her best gown, and after service, which was very long, took an airing in the coach and six, attended by guards and all the state she could muster. She had not 'dined at table' at the period I am speaking of. One morning, her eldest brother, of whom she seems to have stood in great awe, came to her room in company with the Duchess, her mother. He told her to prepare her best clothes, for they were to have *grand couvert* to receive an ambassador from the King of England, and that she should for the first time dine with them. He

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. pp. 410, 411. Ed. 1857.

† Sophia, wife of Dr. William Stuart Archbishop of Armagh, fifth son of John Earl of Bute. "My mother"—writes her son, William Stuart, Esq., who has most kindly allowed the author to avail himself of her very interesting reminiscences—"My mother, who was the daughter of Thomas and Lady Juliana Penn, and granddaughter of the founder of Pennsylvania, was at an early age associated with the Court of George the Third, in consequence of her aunt, the Lady Charlotte Finch, being governess of the royal children; and her subsequent marriage with my father, who was the younger son of John Earl of Bute, the favourite minister of George the Third, again brought her in contact with the most celebrated persons of her time."—The occasional extracts from Mrs. Stuart's Reminiscences, which will be met with in these pages, will, for the sake of brevity, be distinguished as "Stuart MSS."

added :—'You will sit next him at dinner: mind what you say, and *ne faites pas l'enfant*'—a favourite expression of his—'and try to amuse him, and show him that you are not a fool.' She then asked her mother if she was to put on her blue tabby—'*et mes bijoux?*'—'*Mon enfant*,' said the Duchess, '*tu n'en as point.*' And the Queen produced her garnet ear-rings, which were strings of beads sown on a plate, about the size of a half-crown, and were then in fashion; but which, as she said, a housemaid of these days would despise. Thus attired, she followed her mother into the saloon, and Mr. Drummond was introduced to her. To her great surprise her brother led her out first, which she supposed he did because it was her first appearance. Mr. Drummond sat at her right hand. She asked him about his journey, and of England, and then added:—'*On me dit que votre Roi est très extrémement beau et très aimable*,' which seemed to raise a smile both in him and the Duke. A little frightened, she next added:—'*Apparemment vous êtes venu demander la Princesse de Prusse. On dit qu'elle est très belle et qu'elle sera votre Reine?*'—'*Je demande pardon à votre Altesse; je n'ai aucune commission pour cela.*' And the smiles were so striking that she had not courage to open her lips again. In a few minutes, however, the folding-doors flew open to the saloon, which she saw splendidly illuminated; and there appeared a table, two cushions, and everything prepared for a wedding. Her brother then gave her his hand; and, leading her in, used his favourite expression:—'*Allons, ne faites pas l'enfant—tu vas être Reine d'Angleterre.*' Mr. Drummond then advanced. They knelt down. The ceremony, whatever it was, proceeded. She was laid on the sofa, upon which he laid his foot;* and they all embraced her, calling her '*la*

* Either this must have been in jest, which at a stiff court and on a solemn occasion is very unlikely to have been the case, or otherwise it would seem to have been a modest substitute for the vicarious ceremonial, anciently practised at espousals

Reine.' Mr. Drummond then gave her a magnificent *écrin* of diamonds, one jewel of which was a little crown which I have often seen her wear. The evening passed in admiring the jewels and putting them on. She declared from that moment she saw and knew nothing, and was quite bewildered. Mr. Drummond pressed for immediate departure. She begged for one week, that she might take leave of every person and spot, and particularly of her mother, of whom she was very fond. She told me that she ran about from morning till night visiting the poor, and in particular a small garden with medical herbs, common fruit, and flowers, which she cultivated mostly herself, and exclusively for the use and comfort of the poor, to whom, she said, a nosegay or a little fruit were more acceptable than food. And wherever she lived she had a garden made for this purpose. She kept poultry also for the same object. When the day for her departure came, she set out for the sea-coast accompanied by her mother, who consigned her to the hands of the Duchess of Ancaster and Lady Effingham; and she spoke of the agony of that parting, even after so many years, in a manner that showed what it must have been. Her mother was in bad health, but promised to come over in the Spring, which, however, she never lived to fulfil."—"She was an excellent French scholar," according to the same high authority; "well read in her own language; wrote a very pretty hand; played on the

by proxy, of the representative of the bridegroom introducing his leg into the bride's bed. For an illustration of this remarkable rite see Lord Bacon's account of the marriage by proxy of the Arch-Duke Maximilian with Anne, Heiress of Bretagne. "She was not only publicly contracted, but stated as a bride, and solemnly bedded; and, after she was laid, there came in Maximilian's Ambassador with letters of procuration; and, in the presence of sundry noble personages, men and women, put his leg, stripped naked to the knee, between the espousal-sheets, to the end that the ceremony might amount to a consummation."—*Life and Reign of King Henry 7*, in *Kennett's Complete History*, vol. 1, p. 598. See also Mr. Brewer's Calendar of State Papers in the Reign of Henry 8 (vol, 1, p, 861), where there is a no less curious account of a royal marriage by proxy—viz., that of the Princess Mary, daughter of Henry 8, with Louis 12, King of France.

guitar and piano, or rather spinette, having learned of Bach, and sung very sweetly and correctly. She also danced a very fine minuet, the dance of the day; had a lovely complexion, fine hair and teeth, and the neatest little *petite* figure, with a peculiar elegance."

In the mean time, the preparations in England for the approaching nuptials were proceeding with as little delay as possible. The King's former Governor, Lord Harcourt, was despatched to Mecklenburg to make the usual formal demand for the hand of the Princess. The Duchess of Ancaster, the Duchess of Hamilton, and the Countess of Effingham were selected to conduct her to England. The royal yacht, which was to convey her across the Channel, was re-painted, re-decorated, and re-named the "Charlotte." "Will not her stomach be turned by the paint of the vessel?" asked some one of Horace Walpole. "If her head is not turned," he replied, "she may compound for anything else." "Think," he writes to Sir Horace Mann, "of the Crown of England and a handsome young King dropping from the clouds into Strelitz! The crowds, the multitudes that are to stare at her! The swarms to kiss her hand! The pomp of the Coronation! She need be seventeen to bear it!" *

Although the King's thoughts are said to have been still straying towards Lady Sarah Lennox, he nevertheless displayed a becoming impatience to behold and embrace his future consort. On the 1st of August the Duke of Newcastle writes to Lord Hardwicke:—"Lord Harcourt sets out this day; Lord Anson goes the middle of next week. His Majesty seems highly pleased, and showed me the present he has sent the Princess by my Lord Harcourt, of his own picture, richly and most prettily set round with diamonds, and a diamond rose." † A week afterwards, Lord

* Walpole's Letters, vol. 3, p. 428. Ed. 1857.
† Hardwicke Papers; Harris, vol. iii. p. 246.

Hardwicke writes to [illegible], Lord Royston:—"The King is got extremely well, and in haste for his new Queen. He has given Lord Anson, who went away on Thursday evening for Harwich, a paper of instructions—a full sheet—all writ with his own hand." Again, Lord Hardwicke writes to Lord Royston on the 22nd of August:—"As to our future Queen, they are in daily expectation of her. She was to embark at Stade yesterday. Her future progress will depend on the wind, which, as it is in London, is at present contrary; but that is not always a rule to judge what it is at sea. Some are so hasty as to make her land on Monday, others on Tuesday or Wednesday. The King intends to meet her at Greenwich, and to go only with his usual attendants, without any extraordinary parade. The Duke of Devonshire, as Lord Chamberlain, goes as far as Gravesend. His Grace told me yesterday, that his Majesty said to him—'Nobody shall kiss her hand till she is Queen except my Lord Chamberlain, and you must, when you first see her.' His Grace told me further, that it is expected that all Peers, Peeresses, and Privy Councillors, shall be at St. James's to walk at the wedding, which is to be the first night. I thought to have excused myself from the crowd on the wedding-night, but fear I must be an old beau at that ceremony." *

Lord Harcourt, on his arrival at Mecklenburg, seems to have been not only satisfied, but even charmed, with the person and manners of his destined Queen. To Sir Andrew Mitchell he writes on the 17th of August:—"Our Queen, that is to be, has seen very little of the world, but her very good sense, vivacity, and cheerfulness, I dare say, will recommend her to the King and make her the darling of the British nation. She is no regular beauty; but she is of a very pretty size, has a charming complexion, very

* Hardwicke Papers; Harris, vol. iii. pp. 247—8.

pretty eyes, and [is] finely made. In short, she is a very fine girl."*

Not since the time when a still younger bride, Henrietta Maria of France, had passed up the Thames amidst the waving of banners and the roaring of the Tower guns, had the river been more crowded with pleasure-boats, or the barges and the banks of the river been more densely thronged with spectators, than was the case on the 7th of September, the day on which the royal yacht was expected to make its appearance off Greenwich. The public, however, was destined to be disappointed. In the course of the afternoon, it became known that the yacht had entered Harwich road, and that, in consequence of the tempestuous state of the weather, the Princess intended to disembark at that place. Unfortunately, the voyage from Cuxhaven to Harwich had proved a most unpropitious one. For ten days, owing to adverse and violent gales, the royal yacht had been baffled in its attempts to make an English harbour. At one time it was in danger of being driven on the coast of Norway. The Duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton, both of them invalids, had suffered agonies from sea-sickness. The Princess, however, was only slightly indisposed, and then scarcely for half an hour. During the voyage she maintained her usual gaiety, sometimes talking freely with the officers, but principally amusing herself with playing English tunes upon her harpsichord.† "They had a most hazardous voyage," continues Mrs. Stuart in her charming narrative, "and at one time feared not making England; but while the other ladies were crying, she was undaunted; consoled them, prayed, sang Luther's hymns, and, when the tempest a little subsided, played 'God save the King' to her guitar. This I learned from Lady Effingham. I asked her if it was true? She simply said, 'Yes;'

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 439. 2nd Edition.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. pp. 430, 431. Ed. 1857.

that she felt God had not singled her out for nothing; but that if she did perish, His mercy allowed it to save her greater trials." *

It was on the 7th of September that the illustrious lady, who, for nearly sixty years to come, was destined to set an example of piety and virtue to the people of this country, first set her foot upon British soil. The first night of her journey was passed at Witham, the seat of James Earl of Abercorn, a nobleman whose reserve and silence were such that, according to Walpole, the Princess must have imagined herself destined to rule over a realm of taciturnity. Walpole elsewhere speaks of Witham as the "Palace of Silence." At twelve o'clock on the following day the Princess resumed her journey. A stranger in a foreign land, and destined to be married, the same night, to a man whom she had never set eyes upon, her feelings may be more readily imagined than described. At Romford she was met by the royal coaches, into one of which she was handed with the Duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton. She was dressed, we are told, in the English fashion; in a fly cap with rich laced lappets, a stomacher ornamented with diamonds, and a gold brocade suit with a white ground. "On the road," writes Walpole, "they wanted her to curl her *toupet*. She said she thought it looked as well as that of any of the ladies sent to fetch her. If the King bid her, she would wear a periwig; otherwise she would remain as she was." † According to Queen Charlotte's own account in later years—"She was much amused at the crowds of people assembled to see her, and bowed as she passed. She was hideously dressed in a blue satin quilted jesuit, which came up to her chin, and down to her waist; her hair twisted up into knots called a *tête de mouton*, and the strangest little blue coif on

* "*Les Reines ne se noyent pas*," was the calm remark of Queen Henrietta Maria when in similar danger from a tempest at sea.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 432. Ed. 1857.

the top. She had a great jewel like a *Sévigné*, and earrings like those worn now with many drops, a present from the Empress of Russia, who knew of her marriage before she did herself." *

Passing through Islington and along the New Road, the royal carriages entered Hyde Park from Oxford Street, and from thence proceeded, down Constitution Hill, to St. James's Palace. The mass of persons who flocked to bid her welcome was enormous. "The noise," writes Walpole, "of coaches, chaises, horsemen, mob, that have been to see her pass through the parks, is so prodigious, that I cannot distinguish the guns. I am going to be dressed, and before seven shall be launched into the crowd." The acclamations of the populace were gracefully acknowledged by the young Princess. Observing the eagerness of the people to catch a view of her person, she desired that the postilions might be directed to drive at a slower pace. It was not till she caught a sight of the gloomy walls of St. James's Palace, that a slight tremor passed over her frame. Perceiving the beautiful Duchess of Hamilton smiling at her fears—"*You* may laugh," she said; "*you* have been married twice; but to me it is no joke." †

It was a quarter past three o'clock when the Princess reached St. James's. At the garden-gate of the palace she Sept. 8. was met by the King's brother, the Duke of York, who handed her from her carriage. As she gave him her hand, it was remarked that her lips trembled; yet she alighted with apparent alacrity. In the garden she was received by the King, who, anticipating an attempt on her part to kneel and kiss his hand, gallantly embraced her and then led her into

* Stuart MSS.

† Elizabeth Gunning, widow of James sixth Duke of Hamilton, was at this period the wife of John Lord Lorn, afterwards fifth Duke of Argyle. During her widowhood, this beautiful woman had refused the hand of a third Duke—the Duke of Bridgewater. At a later period her charms and her coquetries are said to have afforded grounds for jealousy and uneasiness to the Queen.—*Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 296; *Quarterly Review*, vol. cv. p. 477.

the palace, where he introduced her to the Princess Dowager and his sister, the Princess Augusta. While she was dressing for dinner, one of her ladies happening to remark that the King preferred some particular mode of dress;—"Let him dress himself," she replied; "I shall dress as I please." Being told that the King liked keeping early hours, she replied that she had no partiality for them, adding,—"*qu'elle ne voulait pas se coucher avec les poules.*" At dinner the royal party consisted, besides herself, of the King, the Princess Dowager, and the Princess Augusta.

The Queen's own account of her arrival at St. James's is curious and interesting. "Just," she said, "as they entered Constitution Hill one of the ladies said to the other, looking at her watch—We shall hardly have time to dress for the wedding. 'Wedding!'—said the Queen. 'Yes, Madam, it is to be at twelve.' Upon this she fainted. Lady Effingham, who had a bottle of lavender-water in her hand, threw it in her face, and the carriage almost immediately stopped at the garden-gate of St. James's Palace. Here stood the King, surrounded by his Court. A crimson cushion was laid for her to kneel upon,* and mistaking the hideous old Duke of Grafton for him, as the cushion inclined that way, she was very near prostrating herself before the Duke; but the King caught her in his arms first, and all but carried her

* This mention of the cushion is curious, as showing that, although the King gallantly refused to allow his betrothed to kneel to him, still ancient custom and etiquette had not been dispensed with. The last two foreign Princesses who had arrived in this country to be married to Kings of England, were Henrietta Maria and Catherine of Braganza. Of these ladies, we find the former permitted to kneel to Charles the First, on the occasion of his first meeting her at Dover; the King, however, raising her, "wrapping her up in his arms, and kissing her with many kisses."—*Ellis's Orig. Letters*, vol. iii. p. 196, 1st series. With regard to Catherine of Braganza—as she was in bed when Charles the Second first saw her on her landing at Portsmouth—"by reason," as he writes to Lord Clarendon, "of a little cough and some inclination to a fever"—her case of course affords no second precedent. This allusion to Charles's first interview with his future consort, reminds us of a well-known saying of his to Colonel Legge, that he thought they had brought him a *bat* instead of a woman. Not less insulting was his remark of German Princesses, that he could not marry one of them—"*they were all foggy.*"

upstairs, forbidding any one to enter. Here she found breakfast, which she much needed, and, looking up, saw a very different face from the black old Duke.* From this moment, she said, she never knew real sorrow until his illness." †

In the mean time, those who had been appointed to figure in the nuptial procession began to assemble in the royal apartments. When desired to kiss the peeresses the Princess seemed to be pleased, but at the sight of the bridesmaids looked somewhat disconcerted. "*Mon Dieu*," she said, "*il y en a tant; il y en a tant!*" "The King," writes Walpole, "looked very handsome, and talked to her continually with great good-humour. It does not promise as if they two would be the most unhappy persons in England." ‡

Between nine and ten o'clock at night the procession began to move towards the chapel-royal. The bride was preceded by the peeresses and the unmarried daughters of peers. The King's brothers, the Duke of York and Prince William, walked one on each side of her. The King's uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, gave her away. "The Queen," writes Walpole, "was in white and silver. An endless mantle of violet-coloured velvet—lined with ermine and attempted to be fastened on her shoulder by a bunch of huge pearls—dragged itself, and almost the rest of her clothes, half-way down her waist. On her head was a beautiful little tiara of diamonds worth three-score thousand pounds, which she is to wear at the coronation." Walpole elsewhere writes;—"She looks very sensible, cheerful, and is remarkably genteel. Her tiara of diamonds was very pretty, her stomacher sumptuous; her violet-velvet mantle and ermine so heavy that the spectators knew as much of her upper half as the King himself." § This inconvenient train was supported by the bridesmaids, ten in number, who

* This is apparently an error. The Duke of Grafton of this time, Augustus Henry, afterwards Prime Minister, was only in his twenty-sixth year.

† Stuart MSS.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 432. Ed. 1857. § *Ibid.* pp. 432, 434.

were dressed in robes of white and silver, with diamond coronets on their heads. They consisted of Lady Sarah Lennox, Lady Caroline Russell, Lady Caroline Montagu, Lady Harriot Bentinck, Lady Anne Hamilton, Lady Essex Kerr, Lady Elizabeth Keppel, Lady Louisa Greville, Lady Elizabeth Harcourt, and Lady Susan Fox Strangways. "Lady Caroline Russell," writes Walpole, "is extremely handsome, Lady Elizabeth Keppel very pretty; but nothing ever looked so charming as Lady Sarah Lennox." * The marriage ceremony was performed by Dr. Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, by whom the King had been baptized, and by whom he was subsequently crowned.

At the termination of the marriage-ceremony the guests returned to the drawing-room at St. James's, where the Royal Family remained for about ten minutes. They then retired to a more private apartment, where, supper not being quite ready, the Queen sat down to the harpsichord, and sang and played till it was announced. Owing apparently to her timidity, it was not till between three and four o'clock in the morning that the royal party manifested any sign of breaking up, when the Duke of Cumberland having plainly intimated that the Princess Augusta and himself were becoming completely overpowered by sleep, the young Queen took the hint, and expressed her readiness to retire to rest. She had previously stipulated that no one should accompany her to her dressing-room but the Princess Dowager and her two German waiting-women, and also that no other person should be admitted to the nuptial chamber but the King. †

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. pp. 434, 435. Ed. 1857.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 72; Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 435. Ed. 1857. No doubt the object of the young Queen was to avoid the licence which was formerly permitted even in the bridal chambers of royalty. The last occasion in England on which the company appear to have been admitted to see the bride and bridegroom in bed on the night of their nuptials, was at the subsequent marriage, on the 18th of May, 1797, of the Queen's own daughter, the Princess Royal, to the hereditary Prince of Wirtemburg. The late King William the Fourth, who was present at his sister's wedding, used to relate the fact.—From *private information.*

On the following day, the King held a levee. To Lord Hardwicke he happened to remark that it was "a very fine day." "Yes, Sir," said the old ex-chancellor, "and it was a very fine night." Even Lord Bute, despite his natural pomposity, indulged in a jest with his sovereign. His daughter, Lady Margaret Stuart, had been married, on the preceding day, to Sir James Lowther, afterwards the first Earl of Lonsdale.* "My Lord Oxford," said Lord Bute to the King, "has laid a bet that your Majesty will be a father before Sir James." "Tell my Lord Oxford," said the King, "that I shall be glad to go him halves." It may be mentioned that had the King's offer been accepted, he would have been the winner. After the levee, the Queen, standing under the canopy of the throne, held a drawing-room. The ladies were presented to her by the Duchess of Hamilton; the men by the Duke of Manchester. At night there was a court-ball. On the 10th of September she again held a drawing-room, and on the Monday—seated on the throne and surrounded by her bridesmaids—she received the Address of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London.†

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"Ayant trouvé convenable de demander en mariage la Serenissime Princesse Charlotte, sœur de mon cousin le Duc de Mecklenburg Strelitz, et mes nôces avec cette Princesse s'en étant ensuivies par la celebration qui s'en est faite dans la Chapelle de ma Cour le 8e de ce mois; Je m'empresse de faire part d'un événement aussi important à votre Majesté; et je suis persuadé d'avance que l'heureuse réussite, et conclusion d'une affaire qui interesse autant que le fait ce mariage, tant mon propre bonheur, que celui de mes fidèles sujèts, ne sauroit être vû d'un œuil indifferent par votre Majesté. Mon attention invariable à cultiver

* Sir James Lowther, afterwards first Earl of Lonsdale, died May 24th, 1802, without issue.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. 3, p. 435. Ed. 1857.

la plus étroite amitié et union avec elle, me repond d'un retour sincère de sa part; ne doutant donc aucunement, que vous ne preniez un veritable intérêt à une nouvelle aussi joyeuse, Je l'annonce avec une satisfaction particulière à votre Majesté; et comme il n'y a rien qui me tienne plus à cœur que votre prospérité, et celle de votre famille, Je vous recommande très instamment à la Providence Divine, étant toujours avec les sentimens d'une parfaite amitié.

" Monsieur mon Frère,
" De votre Majesté
" le bon Frère,
" GEORGE R." *

" À ST. JAMES's, *ce* 10e *Septembre*, 1761."

Though the Queen was short in stature, and her figure thinner than it might have been, she was not ill-made. The paleness of her face was set off to advantage by her silken and dark-brown hair, and though her mouth was somewhat large, still a good set of teeth, and a countenance charmingly expressive of goodnature and good sense, made amends for the want of positive beauty. In addition to these latter qualities, her affability, and lively and graceful manner, left a very pleasing impression on all who approached her person. "She is not tall nor a beauty," writes Walpole. "Pale and very thin; but looks sensible, and is genteel. Her hair is darkish and fine; her forehead low, her nose very well, except the nostrils spreading too wide. Her mouth has the same fault, but her teeth are good. She talks a good deal and French tolerably."† "I hear," writes Mrs. Montagu, "the Queen has a most amiable disposition, and I believe one may say in vulgar phrase they will be a happy couple."‡

The coronation of the King and Queen took place on the

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6819, f. 74.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 434. See also Gray and Mason Correspondence, p. 263, where Gray, the poet, draws a very similar picture of the young Queen.

‡ Mrs. Montagu's Letters, vol. iv. p. 368.

22nd of September, a fortnight after their marriage. Never shone a more beautiful morn on seas of heads, on tapestried balconies, on glittering troops, on waving plumes and blazoned heraldry. Thousands of persons slept all night in the open air, and all London poured forth to greet their young King and his gentle consort. That part of the ceremony which took place in Westminster Abbey passed off with its usual solemnity and more than its usual tediousness. But when, later in the day, the King and Queen entered the great hall of William Rufus—when, at their entrance, a thousand lights, as if by enchantment, suddenly illuminated the colossal banqueting-room of the Norman Kings—when the eye fell upon long galleries filled with gorgeous beauty—on peers and peeresses robed in velvet and ermine—on the plumed hats of the Knights of the Bath—on the judges in their scarlet robes, and on prelates in their vestments—on pursuivants and heralds—then indeed was presented as magnificent a spectacle as the mind can well imagine. "The instant the Queen's canopy entered," writes Gray, the poet, "fire was given to all the lustres at once by trains of prepared flax that reached from one to the other. To me it seemed an interval of not half a minute before the whole was in a blaze of spendour. It is true that for that half-minute it rained fire upon the heads of all the spectators, the flax falling in large flakes; and the ladies, Queen and all, were in no small terror, but no mischief ensued. It was out as soon as it fell, and the most magnificent spectacle I ever beheld remained. The King, bowing to the Lords as he passed, with his Crown on his head and the sceptre and orb in his hands, took his place with great majesty and grace. So did the Queen, with her Crown, sceptre, and rod. Then supper was served on gold plate. The Earl Talbot, Duke of Bedford, and Earl of Effingham, in their robes, all three on horseback, prancing and curveting like the hobby-horses in the 'Rehearsal,' ushered in

the courses to the foot of the *haut-pas*. Between the courses, the Champion performed his part with applause. The Earl of Denbigh carved for the King; the Earl of Holderness for the Queen."*

There, too, looking down from one of the galleries, sat one who, in a disguised habit and with his face half concealed, was no unconcerned spectator of that brilliant scene. This person was no other than the young hero of Preston Pans and Falkirk; he who had rendered himself the idol of the rude and devoted Highlanders; he who, by the right of legitimate descent, was entitled to sit upon that very throne which he now had the mortification to behold occupied by another. The fact of Charles Edward having been present at the coronation of George the Third, was related by Earl Marischal to Hume, the historian, only a few days after the ceremony had taken place. "I asked my lord," says Hume, "the reason for this strange fact. 'Why,' says he, 'a gentleman told me that saw him there, and that he even spoke to him, and whispered in his ears these words, "Your Royal Highness is the last of all mortals whom I should expect to see here." "It was curiosity that led me," said the other, "but I assure you," added he, "that the person, who is the object of all this pomp and magnificence, is the person I envy the least."' You see this story is so nearly traced from the fountain-head, as to wear a great face of probability. *What if the Pretender had taken up Dymock's gauntlet?*"†

"The King's whole behaviour at the Coronation," writes Bishop Newton, "was justly admired and commended by every one, and particularly his manner of ascending and seating himself on his throne after his coronation. No

* Letter to the Rev. James Brown; Gray and Mason Correspondence, pp. 274—5, 2nd Edition.

† Letter to Sir John Pringle, dated 10 February, 1773; Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century, vol. ix. p. 401.

actor in the character of *Pyrrhus* in the 'Distressed Mother,'*—not even Booth himself who was celebrated for it in the 'Spectator,'—ever ascended the throne with so much grace and dignity. There was another particular which those only could observe who sat near the Communion Table, as did the Prebendaries of Westminster. When the King approached the Communion Table in order to receive the Sacrament, he inquired of the Archbishop whether he should not lay aside his Crown? The Archbishop asked the Bishop of Rochester, but neither of them knew or could say what had been the usual form. The King determined within himself that humility best became such a solemn act of devotion, and took off his Crown and laid it down during the Administration."†—"His countenance," writes Mrs. Montagu, who saw the King pass from the Abbey to the Hall, "expressed a benevolent joy in the vast concourse of people and their loud acclamations, but there was not the least air of pride or insolent exultation. In the religious offices his Majesty behaved with the greatest reverence and deepest attention. He pronounced with earnest solemnity his engagement to his people, and when he was to receive the Sacrament he pulled off his Crown. How happy that in the day of the greatest worldly pomp he should remember his duty to the King of Kings!" According to the same authority, the King's knowledge of precedents and his retentive memory enabled him more than once during the day to set, not only the Peers, but the Heralds right, in the exercise of their respective duties—"which he did with great good humour."‡

Horace Walpole, who was a spectator of the Coronation

* A once popular tragedy by Ambrose Philips, first acted at Drury Lane in 1712. This was the "new tragedy" to which Sir Roger de Coverley is represented to have been carried by the "Spectator."

† Life of Bishop Newton by Himself,—Works, vol. i. pp. 83—4.

‡ Mrs. Montagu's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 367, 368.

of George the Third, has also described the scene in one of the most graphic of his charming letters. "For the Coronation," he writes, "if a puppet-show could be worth a million, that is. The multitudes, balconies, guards, and processions, made Palace Yard the liveliest spectacle in the world. The hall was the most glorious. The blaze of lights, the richness and variety of habits, the ceremonial, the benches of peers and peeresses, frequent and full, was as awful as a pageant can be; and yet, for the King's sake and my own, I never wish to see another."—"My Lady Harrington," continues Walpole, "covered with all the diamonds she could borrow, hire, or seize, and with the air of Roxana, was the finest figure at a distance. She complained to George Selwyn that she was to walk with Lady Portsmouth, who would have a wig and a stick. 'Pho,' said he, 'you will only look as if you were taken up by the constable.' She told this everywhere, thinking the reflection was on my Lady Portsmouth. Lady Pembroke, alone at the head of the countesses, was the picture of majestic modesty; the Duchess of Richmond as pretty as nature and dress, with no pains of her own, could make her; Lady Spencer, Lady Sutherland, and Lady Northampton, very pretty figures; Lady Kildare, still beauty itself, if not a little too large. The ancient peeresses were by no means the worst party: Lady Westmoreland, still handsome, and with more dignity than all; the Duchess of Queensbury looked well, though her locks milk-white; Lady Albemarle, very genteel; nay, the middle age had some good representatives in Lady Holderness, Lady Rochfort, and Lady Strafford, the perfectest little figure of all.* My Lady

* Two days afterwards Gray, the poet, writes to the Rev. J. Brown;—"The noblest and most graceful figures among the ladies were the Marchioness of Kildare, Viscountess Spencer, Countesses of Harrington, Pembroke, and Strafford, and the Duchess of Richmond. Of the older sort—for there is a grace that belongs to age too—the Countess of Westmoreland, Countess of Albemarle, and Duchess of Queensbury."—*Gray and Mason Corresp.*, pp. 270–1. "The ladies," writes Mrs.

Suffolk ordered her robes, and I dressed part of her head, as I made some of my Lord Hertford's dress; for, you know, no profession comes amiss to me, from a Tribune of the People to a habit-maker. Do not imagine that there were not figures as excellent on the other side: old Exeter, who told the King he was the handsomest man she ever saw; old Effingham, and a Lady Say and Seale, with her hair powdered and her tresses black, were an excellent contrast to the handsome. Lord B—— put on rouge upon his wife and the Duchess of Bedford in the Painted Chamber; the Duchess of Queensbury told me of the latter, that she looked like an orange-peach, half red and half yellow. The coronets of the peers and their robes disguised them strangely. It required all the beauty of the Dukes of Richmond and Marlborough to make them noticed. One there was, though of another species, the noblest figure I ever saw, the High Constable of Scotland, Lord Errol. As one saw him in a space capable of containing him, one admired him. At the wedding, dressed in tissue, he looked like one of the Giants in Guildhall, new gilt. It added to the energy of his person, that one considered him acting so considerable a part in that very Hall, where, so few years ago, one saw his father, Lord Kilmarnock, condemned to the block. The Champion acted his part admirably, and dashed down his gauntlet with proud defiance. His associates, Lord Effingham, Lord Talbot, and the Duke of Bedford, were woeful."* It may

Montagu, "made a glorious appearance. Wherever there was any beauty of countenance, or shape, or air, they were all heightened by the dress. Lady Talbot was a fine figure."—*Mrs. Montagu's Letters*, vol. iv. p. 364.

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. pp. 437—8. "Of the men," writes Gray, "doubtless the noblest and most striking figure was the Earl of Errol and after him the Dukes of Ancaster, Richmond, Marlborough, Kingston; Earls of Northampton, Pomfret, Viscount Weymouth, &c.—*Gray and Mason Corresp.*, p. 271. James Earl of Errol was the eldest son of the unfortunate Earl of Kilmarnock, who, only fifteen years previously, had been tried by his peers in that very Hall and sent from thence to the scaffold on Tower Hill. The father suffered on the scaffold on the 18th August 1746, at the age of forty-one. The son died on the 3rd of July 1778, at the age of fifty-two.

be mentioned, that the white horse, on which the champion rode into Westminster Hall, was the same which George the Second had ridden at the battle of Dettingen.*

During the day, there occurred one or two trifling incidents which disturbed the equanimity of the great officers of the Household. For instance, in the Hall no chairs of state had been provided for the King and Queen; the sword of state had been forgotten, and that of the Lord Mayor had to be borrowed for the occasion. When the King complained of these omissions to the Deputy Earl Marshal, the Earl of Effingham,—"It is true, Sir," was his lordship's blundering reply, "that there has been some neglect, but I have taken care that the *next coronation* shall be regulated in the exactest manner possible." Instead of being offended by the remark, the King insisted on the Earl's repeating it several times for his amusement.† A similar awkward observation had formerly been made by the beautiful Lady Coventry to George the Second. "The only sight," she said, "which she was eager to see was a coronation." The old king laughed heartily, and at supper repeated the story in high good-humour to the royal family.

The individual who would seem to have been the most to blame for the mishaps which took place at the coronation, was the Lord Steward of the Household, William Earl Talbot. Of this nobleman little more need be said than that he was a man of pleasure and a patron of pugilists, distinguished as much by personal strength and beauty, as by his swaggering manners and rude demeanour. Having recently, to the great dissatisfaction of the Equerries and Maids of Honour, introduced a sweeping system of economy into the royal household, he appears to have deemed it his duty to carry out the same parsimonious principle at the coro-

* Annual Register for 1761, p. 282.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 445. Ed. 1857.

nation. Accordingly, at the great banquet in Westminster Hall, the Knights of the Bath, the Aldermen of the city of London, and the Barons of the Cinque Ports, severally found themselves deprived of the tables which it had been usual to provide for them on such occasions. "To *us*," said Sir William Stanhope, a Knight of the Bath, "it is an affront, for *some* of us are gentlemen." The Aldermen were indignant in the extreme. "We have invited the King," said Alderman Beckford, "to a banquet which will cost us ten thousand pounds, and yet, when we come to court, we are to be given nothing to eat." The argument was unanswerable, and a table was set apart for them. The Barons of the Cinque Ports were less fortunate. "If you come to me," said Lord Talbot, "as Lord Steward, I tell you it is impossible; if as Lord Talbot, I am a match for any of you."*

Considering the unpopular character of this nobleman, it was only natural that a misadventure, which happened to him at the coronation, should have been witnessed with satisfaction. As Lord High Steward for the day, it had been part of his duty during the banquet to ride on horseback up to the dais, and, after having made his obeisance to the sovereign, to back his horse out of the hall. The animal, as a matter of course, had been trained for the purpose, and unfortunately had been trained only too well. To the great amusement of the spectators and to the infinite discomfiture of the Lord High Steward, it persisted in entering the hall backwards; nor was it without

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 75. "Next," writes Gray, "I must tell you that the Barons of the Cinque Ports, who by ancient right should dine at a table on the *haut-pas* at the right hand of the throne, found that no provision at all had been made for them, and, representing their case to Earl Talbot, he told them,—'Gentlemen, if you speak to me as High Steward I must tell you there was no room for you; if as Lord Talbot, I am ready to give you satisfaction in any way you think fit.' They are several of them gentlemen of the best families; so this has bred ill blood. In the next place, the City of London found they had no table neither; but Beckford bullied my Lord High Steward till he was forced to give them that intended for the Knights of the Bath, and, instead of it, they dined at the entertainment prepared for the Great Officers."—*Gray and Mason Corresp.*, pp. 276–7.

much difficulty that it was prevented advancing with its hindquarters turned towards their Majesties.*

One incident occurred at George the Third's coronation which occasioned some alarm to the superstitious. In Westminster Hall, the finest of the royal jewels fell from the crown.†

"When first, portentous, it was known
Great George had jostled from his crown
The brightest diamond there,
The omen-mongers one and all
Foretold some mischief must befall;
Some loss beyond compare." ‡

When, in 1782, the British Crown was dispossessed of its proudest appanage, the North American Colonies, there were many persons who eagerly called to mind the warning portent of 1761.§ Of course, in our time, there are few who will be inclined to attach any importance to the incident, yet it seems at least as well worth recording as Sir Edward Zouch's blunder on the death of James the First in proclaiming Charles the First at the "court-gate" at Theobalds not as the "indubitable," but "*dubitable* heir to the throne" ‖—at least as curious as the well-known fact

* When, some time afterwards, the celebrated John Wilkes made himself merry with this incident in the North Briton, Lord Talbot was so incensed as to challenge him to single combat. Wilkes was not the person to disappoint an adversary on such an occasion, and accordingly it was settled that on a certain evening they should sup together, with their seconds, at the Red Lion Inn at Bagshot, with the view of fighting on the following morning. By the express desire, however, of Lord Talbot it was agreed that they should settle their differences at once. Accordingly after supper—the moon shining at the time with unusual brightness—they repaired with their seconds to the garden of the inn. Each fired a shot at the other; neither hitting his adversary. "Lord Talbot," writes Wilkes to his friend, Lord Temple, "desired that we might now be good friends and retire to the inn to drink a bottle of claret together, which we did with great good-humour and much laughter."—*Wilkes's Corresp.* vol. iii. pp. 29—39.

† Fortunately it was recovered.—*Annual Register* for 1761, p. 234.

‡ Wright's "England under the House of Hanover," vol. i. p. 393, 2nd Edition.

§ Hughes's History of England, vol. i. p. 238, 3rd Edition.

‖ Howell's Letters, p. 184, Edition 1753. Howell was himself an inmate of Theobalds at the time of James the First's death and of the proclamation of his unfortunate successor.

of the blood of the wounded falcon falling on Charles's famous bust by Bernini on its way to the palace of Whitehall—as the undoubted incident of the gold head of that monarch's stick falling to the ground at his trial in Westminster Hall*—and lastly, as noteworthy as the strange circumstances of James the Second's crown not only tottering on his head at his coronation in Westminster Abbey, but that the person who prevented its falling off should have been Henry, the brother of the great patriot, Algernon Sidney. "It was not the first occasion," he said, "of his family having supported the Crown."—"I saw," writes an eye-witness of the latter incident, "the tottering of his [James's] crown upon his head, the broken canopy over it, and the rent flag hanging upon the White Tower over against my door, when I came home from the Coronation. It was torn by the wind, at the same time the signal was given to the Tower that he was crowned. I put no great stress upon omens, but I cannot despise them. Most of them I believe come by chance, but some from superior intellectual agents, especially those which regard the fate of Kings and nations."† From another contemporary, Archdeacon Echard, we learn that on this same day the royal arms, beautifully stained in glass, fell without any ascertainable cause from the windows of one of the principal London churches.‡

* Sir Philip Warwick's Memoirs, p. 339. King Charles himself related this fact to Bishop Juxon; adding that although he "seemed unconcerned," the incident "shocked him very much."—*Ibid.*

† Letter from Dr. Hickes to Dr. Chartlett, dated 23 January, 1711; *Aubrey's Letters of Eminent Persons*, vol. i. p. 213.

‡ Echard's History of England, vol. iii. p. 735.

CHAPTER VII.

Changes in the Ministry—Mr. Pitt recovers the popular favour—The King and Queen dine at Guildhall, where the King meets a cool reception—Lord Bute mobbed, and Mr. Pitt cheered—Pitt's views of the Bourbon "Family Compact" found to be correct—War declared against Spain—Unregretted retirement of the Duke of Newcastle, who declines a pension offered him by the King—Dangerous illness of the King—Birth of a Prince, afterwards George IV.—The King's kindly recollections of Eton School.

LET us turn for awhile from the incidents and frivolities of a Court, to more important and instructive events. Lord Bute, as we have seen, had accomplished the paramount object of his ambition. Pitt had ceased to be a Minister of the Crown. The harpies and sycophants, who clung to the favourite Earl and his fortunes, were loud in congratulating him on his ephemeral triumph. "I sincerely wish your lordship joy," writes Bubb Dodington, "of being delivered of a most impracticable colleague, his Majesty of a most imperious servant, and the country of a most dangerous Minister." * Dodington, six months previously, had been raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Melcombe, an honour for which he had long been sighing in vain.†

"When for some time he'd sat at the Treasury Board,
And the clerks there with titles had tickled his ear,
From every day hearing himself called a lord
He begged of Sir Robert to make him a peer.

* Adolphus's History of England, vol. i. p. 464, Appendix, 4th Edition.

† The patent, creating him Baron Melcombe of Melcombe Regis, in the county of Dorset, is dated in April 1761. He died the following year.

But in an ill hour—
For Walpole looked sour—
And said it was not in his will or his power.
'Do you think, Sir, the King would advance such a scrub,
Or the peerage debase with the name of a Bubb?'"*

At the same time that Pitt resigned the seals as Secretary of State, Earl Temple also threw up his appointment Oct. 9. of Lord Privy Seal and retired with his illustrious brother-in-law into private life. Lord Temple was succeeded by John Duke of Bedford; Pitt by a nobleman of Tory principles, Charles Earl of Egremont. "It is difficult," says Walpole, speaking of Pitt's resignation, "to say which exulted most, France, Spain, or Lord Bute, for Mr. Pitt was the common enemy of all three." But of all men probably the Duke of Newcastle was the most elated. "I never," writes Sir George Colebrooke, in his MS. Memoirs, "saw the Duke in higher spirits than after Mr. Pitt, thwarted by the Cabinet in his proposal of declaring war against Spain, had given notice of resignation."† Blind to every consideration except a pompous conception of his own importance, the intriguing old statesman was unable to perceive that his own disgrace was inevitably involved in the downfall of his dreaded colleague. Even a blunt speech made to him by Lord Talbot was unable to disturb his equanimity. "Do not," said the Earl, "die for joy on the Monday, nor for fear on the Tuesday."‡

Mr. Pitt, in the meantime, had succeeded in recovering the popularity which his acceptance of a pension had partially lost him. In vain his enemies accused him of having betrayed his country for gold. In vain the lampooners, the pamphleteers, the caricaturists of the day—hounded on by Bute and his agents—pelted him with a pitiless storm of personal invective and abuse. The very virulence of their

* "A Grub upon Bubb," by Sir C. Hanbury Williams; *Works*, vol. i. p. 26.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 82, note.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

attacks promoted the reaction in his favour,* while the hatred, in which Bute was held, rendered it complete. The middle and lower classes had not forgotten the glories and triumphs which Pitt had achieved for his country. They still remembered that he had been the Minister of their choice.

If proof had been required by the King and Bute of Pitt's extraordinary hold on the affections of the people, it was amply furnished on the 9th of November this year, on which day the young King and his newly-married consort dined in State at Guildhall. It was the King's first visit to the City since his accession, and, being also "Lord Mayor's day"—the great pageantry-day of the citizens of London,—the streets were, as may be readily imagined, crowded almost to suffocation. Among the guests invited to the banquet were Pitt and Bute. The friends of the former never doubted but that his progress to Guildhall would prove an ovation; while the friends of Bute, on the other hand, trembled for his personal safety. Bute himself was only too well aware of the danger which he ran, and accordingly had consented to the hiring of a number of prize-fighters for the protection of his person, to and from the city. "My good Lord," he writes to Lord Melcombe, "my situation, at all times perilous, has become much more so; for I am no stranger to the language held in this great city—'Our darling's resignation is owing to Lord Bute, who might have prevented it with the King, and he must answer for all the consequences.'" †

It was fortunate for Bute, that on the day of the great entertainment, it was not till his equipage had proceeded to within a quarter of a mile of Guildhall that it was identified. On Ludgate Hill it was mistaken for that of Mr. Pitt,

* For an account of the scurrilous attacks on Pitt at this period, see Wright's "England under the House of Hanover," vol. i. p. 395.

† Adolphus's History of England, vol. i. p. 465, Appendix, 4th Edition.

and accordingly the courtier was greeted with the plaudits which were intended for the patriot. At St. Paul's, however, the crowd discovered its error. Suddenly a stentorian voice from the multitude exclaimed,—"By G—, this is not Pitt. This is Bute, and be d——d to him!" A terrible outroar followed the announcement. Groans, hisses, yells, shouts of—"No Scotch rogues!—no Butes!—no Newcastle salmon!—Pitt for ever!"—resounded from all sides. A rush was made at the coach. Not only the rich liveries of the coachman and footmen, but the lace-ruffles of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Barrington, who had the courage to accompany his friend, were bespattered with mud. The hired bruisers fought their best for their employer, but just as the coach was turning down King Street they were overpowered and driven back. The mob, thus victorious, now turned its whole attention towards Bute, who was, in fact, in a most critical situation. The leaders of the outrage were in the act of cutting the traces of the carriage; in a moment or two more he would probably have been dragged from it, when a large force of constables and peace-officers rushed to his assistance. Even then it was with difficulty that they were able to escort him in safety into Guildhall; nor was it till after some time had elapsed, that he became sufficiently composed to enable him to face the company which was assembled in the reception-room. At night, he wisely accepted the Lord Chancellor's invitation to return with him in his state coach, and thus eluded the vigilant look-out of the rabble.*

Soon after the equipage of Bute had entered the crowded streets, there appeared that of Pitt. The reception which he met with was very different from that which had greeted the recognition of his rival. As he passed along, seated in the same carriage with his brother-in-law Lord Temple,

* Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. 166—8; Harris's Life of Lord Hardwicke, vol. iii. pp. 291 and 321; Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 90.

handkerchiefs were waved from balconies and windows; the people applauded him 'to the very echo;' many persons were seen forcing their way through the crowd, contented so long as they were able to shake hands with one of his footmen, or kiss the head of one of his horses. Lastly came the King. Anxious, as he ever was, to possess the affections of his subjects, the cold reception which they gave him must have been mortifying to him in the extreme. As the cumbrous gilt state-coach * rolled on between the avenues of the people, scarcely a handkerchief was waved; scarcely a voice cheered. Not less chilling was the reception which he encountered in the great Hall as, preceded by the Lord Mayor,

* There may be persons to whom it may be interesting to be informed, that the present state-coach of the sovereign was built in 1762, at no less an expense than 7,562*l.* 4*s.* 3*d.* Unwieldy and ridiculous-looking as it is, to the antiquarian it presents a curious link between the cumbrous gilt equipages of the sixteenth century, and the light and simple carriages of our own time. But the state coach of the Speaker of the House of Commons affords perhaps a still better specimen; containing, as it does, what was formerly called the *boot*,—the seat, or stool, facing each of the side windows,—on which, back to back, severally sit the Speaker's chaplain and Secretary. The vast size of the coaches of former days, and the number of persons they were capable of containing, are almost matters of astonishment. For instance, when Queen Elizabeth went to St. Paul's to return thanks for the defeat of the Spanish Armada, we find her seated "in a chariot-throne with four pillars behind to bear a canopy; on the top whereof was a crown imperial, and two lower pillars before, whereon stood a lion and a dragon, supporters of the arms of England." When Henry the Fourth of France, in 1610, was stabbed by Ravaillac, there were in the coach with him no fewer than seven persons, and yet no one witnessed the blow. Again, when Charles the First was entertained at the court of Madrid in 1623, we find in one of the royal equipages the King of Spain, the Queen, the Infanta, and the Infants Don Carlos and Don Fernando,—"the Infanta," writes Howell, "sitting in the *boot*, with a blue ribbon about her arm, on purpose that the Prince might distinguish her." In another carriage on the Prado were Charles, the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Bristol, Count Gondomar, Sir Walter Aston, and apparently the Duke of Cea, to whom the carriage belonged. Again, in 1700, when Louis the Fourteenth accompanied his grandson, the Duke of Anjou, towards the frontiers, on his departure to assume the sovereignty of Spain, we find the whole royal family sociably seated in the enormous vehicle. "The two Kings," writes St. Simon, "and the Duchess of Burgundy, sat on one side; the Dauphin and the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry opposite, and the Duke and Duchess of Orleans *at the two doors*." Lastly, as late as 1789, when the mob dragged the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth from Versailles to Paris, there were in the coach as many as eight persons,—namely, the King, the Queen, the Dauphin, the Duchess of Angoulême, Louis the Eighteenth, then Count de Provence, his wife, Madame Elizabeth, and Madame de Tourgel. Coaches were of French invention. In the reign of Francis the First,

he passed to his seat at the banquet-table. Even when the trumpet sounded, and when the toastmaster, advancing to the front of the royal table, intimated that "our Sovereign Lord the King" drank the "loving cup" to the health and prosperity of the Corporation of London, scarcely a murmur of applause was elicited by the announcement. Pitt, on the contrary, had been welcomed at his entrance with a burst of huzzas, and an enthusiastic clapping of hands, in which the Members of the Corporation, headed by the impetuous Alderman Beckford, were among the first to join. On that day, in the famous Hall from which his statue still frowns down—as if denouncing the misgovernment of Kings—the triumph of the "Great Commoner" was complete.

Pitt's conduct, in thus personally entering into a competition with his sovereign for popularity, was not only much censured at the time, but he himself subsequently lamented it as having been a grave indiscretion. "My old friend," writes Lord Lyttelton, "was once a skilful courtier; but since he himself has attained a kind of *royalty*, he seems more attentive to support his own majesty than to pay the necessary regards to that of his Sovereign." * The fact is, that in accepting the Lord Mayor's invitation Pitt had been influenced, not by his own judgment, but by those of his turbulent contemporaries, Lord Temple and Alderman Beckford. †

But a triumph, nobler and far more creditable than the applause of huzzaing crowds and patriotic aldermen, awaited the fallen minister. We have seen him discovering the

there were but two in Paris; one belonging to the Queen, the other to Diana, natural daughter of Henry the Second. Even as late as 1550, Paris could boast but of three coaches.

* Phillimore's Memoirs of Lord Lyttelton, vol. ii. p. 646.

† A letter from Alderman Beckford to Pitt, urging him to attend the banquet, is still extant. "Men's hopes and fears," he writes, "are strangely agitated at this critical juncture; but all agree universally, that you ought to make your appearance at Guildhall on Monday next with Lord Temple; and, upon the maturest reflection, I am clear you ought not to refuse this favour to those who are so sincerely your friends." This letter is thus indorsed by Lady Chatham;—"Mr. Beckford, 1761;

existence of the secret treaty between France and Spain, and urging the policy of an immediate declaration of war against the latter country; we have seen the correctness of his information discredited, his advice disregarded, and himself in consequence driven from the Administration. From whatever source he may have derived that information—whether, in the words of Walpole, by "a masterpiece of intelligence," or whether, as has been confidently asserted, it was communicated to him by Lord Marischal in gratitude for the reversal of his attainder—are questions of minor importance. It is sufficient to observe, that before the end of three months from the date of Pitt's retirement, a series of events had occurred which manifested alike how wise had been his counsels, and how completely Bute and his colleagues had been made the dupes of Spanish intrigue. For some time past the language of the Court of Spain had become more and more peremptory; a temperate request of the Court of England to be furnished with information respecting the Family Compact had been haughtily refused; and thus a war with Spain as well as with France became obviously inevitable. Accordingly, nearly at one and the same time, the British Ambassador, the Earl of Bristol, received orders from his Court to retire from Madrid, and the Spanish Ambassador, De Fuentes, quitted London for Paris. On the 2nd of January, 1762, the King in full council announced that peace was no longer maintainable; on the 4th Great Britain declared war against Spain, and on the 16th Spain declared war against Great Britain.

Peace, as has been already mentioned, was at this time the great object both of the King and Bute, and accordingly it may be readily imagined how unpalatable this new state of affairs must have been to the Court. True it is, that the

to press my lord to appear with Lord Temple: to which he yielded for his friend's sake; but, as he always declared, both then and after, against his better judgment." —*Chatham Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 165.

contest which followed proved a glorious one for England. Martinico, Granada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Havanna, and the Philippine Islands, were, one after the other, captured from the enemy. It must be remembered, however, that it was not to Bute and to his short-sighted colleagues, but entirely to the great statesman whom they had driven from power, that the country was indebted for these glorious results. He it was who had predicted, and had made preparations for the day of peril; indeed, had his advice been followed, the treasure-ships of Spain, instead of lying safely at anchor in the Bay of Cadiz, would long since have been towed in triumph up the Thames, and their golden cargoes been deposited in the vaults of the Bank of England. As it was, the world awarded all the credit where it was really due. Among his own countrymen the name of Pitt was rendered more popular, and throughout Europe more formidable, than ever. *

Parliament assembled on the 19th, and as it was known that Bute was to deliver his maiden speech on the occasion, the House of Lords was crowded with an eager audience. Of those who listened to him, there were probably but few who did not anticipate, still fewer who did not desire, a failure. Each and all, however, were destined to be disappointed. His speech, if not a triumph, was at least a suc-

* "Give me leave," writes Bishop Warburton to Pitt, on the 26th of March, 1762, "to congratulate you on the success at Martinico. I do it with singular propriety; for it is the effect of an impulse, (I hope not yet ceased,) which your glorious administration had imparted to the whole political machine." Sir Richard Lyttelton also writes to Pitt from Rome on the 14th of April;—"I cannot forbear congratulating you on the glorious conquest of Martinico, which, whatever effect it may have in England, astonishes all Europe, and fills every mouth with praise and commendation,—with applause and admiration, I may say,—of the noble perseverance and superior ability of the planner of this great and decisive undertaking." —*Chatham Corresp.*, vol. ii. 172—3. "Do you think," writes Walpole to George Montagu, "Demosthenes or Themistocles ever raised the Grecian stocks two per cent. in four-and-twenty hours? I shall burn all my Greek and Latin books; they are histories of little people. The Romans never conquered the world till they had conquered three parts of it, and were three hundred years about it. We subdue the globe in three campaigns; and a globe, let me tell you, as big again as it was in their days."—*Walpole's Corresp.*, vol. iv. p. 219.

cess. Even the prejudiced Walpole admits that it was not "quite so ridiculous" as his enemies wished. A manner somewhat pompous and theatrical, and an affected habit of making long pauses after having delivered a passage which he imagined to be particularly telling, are said to have been the chief faults of his oratory. Charles Townshend amused his contemporaries by styling them "minute-guns."

In the mean time, Bute had become first Minister of the Crown in everything except in name. One impediment only prevented his at once assuming the Premiership. The Duke of Newcastle—the timid, time-serving old Duke of Newcastle—still stood in his way. As Bute had so recently succeeded in displacing the most popular minister and commanding orator of his age, it might naturally have been supposed that he would have encountered little difficulty in triumphing over a despised and querulous old man, who enjoyed neither the confidence of the people nor the support of the Crown. But, in spite of hint after hint and insult after insult, Newcastle continued to cling to office with a morbid pertinacity which was almost as despicable as it was incomprehensible. Deeply steeped though he was in perfidy himself, and accustomed as he had been to plot against others, it was nevertheless long before he could be brought to comprehend that intriguers as faithless as himself were counterplotting against his own power.

The King had apparently never liked Newcastle. So early as the 6th of November, 1760, we find the old statesman plaintively writing to the Earl of Hardwicke—"The King has been remarkably cold and ungracious, insomuch that I could hardly get one word, or the least mark of approbation, at my proposal of raising twelve millions for him." Again, he writes on the following day—"For myself, I am the greatest cipher that ever appeared at court. The young King is hardly civil to me; talks to me of nothing, and scarce answers me upon my own Treasury

affairs." * To a statesman—who for nearly half a century had not only filled the highest offices in the State, but who, with the interval only of a few months, had for eight years been Prime Minister of England—one might have thought that so undisguised a manifestation of contempt, and want of confidence, would have induced him to fling the Seals of Office at the feet of his Sovereign. So all-absorbing, however, was his passion for power and place, that neither the contumely of his sovereign, the advice of his friends, nor the slights put upon him by his colleagues, proved of the slightest avail. With the dregs of life, observes Walpole, he clung to the dregs of power. The more he was neglected or affronted, the more the old statesman cringed, flattered, and endured. It has even been asserted that two of the subordinate Lords of the Treasury—Sir Gilbert Elliot and James Oswald—were instructed to insult him at his own Board. Some truth there probably was in the assertion, inasmuch as we find the Duke himself complaining to the Duke of Bedford that "some late transactions" at the Treasury—more especially with the Secretary, Samuel Martin—must make him appear insignificant there, and are "a plain declaration of the little regard and confidence" reposed in him by his colleagues in the Government. "Except in the case of the Proberts," he writes, "I don't remember one single recommendation of mine which has taken place since his Majesty's accession to the Crown." † Even insults, put personally upon him by his own colleagues, seem to have been borne without remonstrance. From Bute he is said to have received "the most unkindest cut of all." For instance, the Duke having preferred a strong recommendation to the King for the promotion of a certain prelate to the Archbishopric of York—"Why," asked Bute, "if your Grace has so high

* Hardwicke Papers, Harris, vol. iii. p. 230.
† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 80.

an opinion of him did you not promote him *when you had the power?*" But the crowning indignity offered to him was the unprecedented measure of creating seven new Peers without any previous consultation with him as First Minister of the Crown. Now, it was thought, he must infallibly resign; but, on the contrary, he not only put up with the affront, but plaintively requested that his own cousin, Thomas Pelham,* might be added to the number. It is extraordinary, remarked Walpole, how many shocks will be endured by an old Minister, or by an old mistress, before they can be shaken off.†

From his sovereign the Duke continued to meet with as little consideration as he did from his colleagues. When, on the 14th of May, the Duke for the first time hinted to the King an intention of retiring into private life—"Then, my Lord," was the cold reply, "I must fill your place as well as I can." A similar intimation made by the Duke to Bute was received by the latter in the same chilling manner. His Lordship, said the Duke, "answered drily that if I resigned the Peace might be retarded; but never requested me to continue in office nor said a civil thing to me afterwards while we remained together." ‡ Nevertheless, believing his services to be indispensable, he continued to hang about the Treasury; nor was it till the 26th, after further pressure had been put upon him, that his resignation was formally tendered to, and accepted by his Sovereign.

Thus fell the once-courted, flattered, dreaded Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, he who with impunity had insulted one heir to the Crown, and had carried off the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge from

* Thomas Pelham, on the death of the Duke of Newcastle in 1768, succeeded him as Baron Pelham of Stanmer, and in 1801 was created Earl of Chichester. He died January 8, 1805.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 155.

‡ Adolphus's History of England, vol. i. p. 65, 4th Edition.

another! No British Minister perhaps ever fell with less dignity, or was less regretted. The fact is little creditable to human nature and still less flattering to human greatness, that, notwithstanding the ranks of the Church, the State, the Navy, and the Army were filled with his nominees and dependents—notwithstanding that half the House of Commons had either pocketed his bribes, or were indebted to him for making the fortune of a son, a nephew, or a cousin—notwithstanding that many of the Judges were indebted to him for their ermine, and so many of the Bishops for their lawn sleeves—yet, when he fell, "no man cried God save him;" not a single colleague paid him the compliment of retiring with him into private life. The Parliamentary majorities which he had so long commanded glided unscrupulously over to the standard of Bute. The Duke's splendid saloons in Lincoln's Inn Fields were deserted by his flatterers, and even his hospitable table and beautiful groves at Clermont were deserted by his friends.

"———The sinking statesman's door
Poured in the morning-worshipper no more."

"The Duke of Newcastle," writes his contemporary, Dr. King, "has spent half a million, and made the fortunes of five hundred men, and yet is not allowed to have one real friend." *

However hurt and mortified the Duke may have felt at the general neglect and ingratitude which he experienced on his quitting office, it was the conduct of the Bench of Bishops in particular which affected him the most deeply and bitterly. He had long since taken the Church into his especial favour; the dispensation of its patronage had for years been his peculiar province. With scarcely an exception, as has already been mentioned, the Bishops were indebted to him, either for their mitres or else for advancement to a wealthier

* Dr. King's Anecdotes of his Own Time, p. 109, 2nd Edition.

diocese. Many of them he had raised from obscurity. And yet, at the farewell levee held by the retiring Minister, one Prelate only, Dr. Cornwallis, Bishop of Lichfield, repaired to Newcastle House to tender him his condolence. The Duke was not only mortified and hurt, but was deeply and lastingly offended. His language, usually so poor and ungrammatical, rises almost to eloquence when he descants on the behaviour of the Episcopal Bench. Thus for instance he pours out his indignation to Lord Hardwicke;—"Can Christian Bishops, made and promoted to the highest stations in the Church by me,—see [ing] such repeated acts of cruelty, uncharitableness, and *revenge* to one who has been their benefactor, sit still without publicly declaring against, and resenting, such measures? If that was the case, these villanies would be soon stopped, and, if it had been originally the case, would never have been attempted." * It is but fair, however, to observe that Dr. Philip Young, Bishop of Norwich, had not only the excuse of being out of town at the time of the Duke's disgrace, but that to the last he remained staunch and grateful to the fallen founder of his fortunes.

At the parting interview between the Duke of Newcastle and his sovereign, when kind words could no longer be construed into an invitation to remain in power, the King, notwithstanding Newcastle's subsequent complaints to the contrary, appears to have done his utmost to soften the fall and assuage the distress of the veteran statesman. To George Grenville, Bute writes on the 25th;—"The King's conduct to the Duke of Newcastle to-day was great and generous." † He feared, said the King, in the course of their interview, that his Grace's private fortune had been diminished by his zeal for the House of Hanover; he proposed therefore to confer on him a pension corresponding with his long

* Hardwicke Papers, Harris, vol. iii. p. 334.
† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 448.

services and high rank; it would be doing no more, delicately remarked the young King, than discharging a debt due to his Grace from the Crown. To the infinite credit of the Duke the boon was declined by him. If his private fortune, he told the King, had suffered by his loyalty, it was a source to him both of pleasure and pride. If no longer able to serve his country he would at least not be a burden to her. His Majesty's approbation, he added, was the only reward which he asked.* To Sir Andrew Mitchell Mr. Symner writes on the 31st of December;—"It moves one to compassion to think of the poor old Duke. A man once possessed of 25,000*l.* per annum of landed estate, with 10,000*l.* in emoluments of Government, now reduced to an estate of scarcely 6,000*l.* per annum, and going into retirement,—not to say sinking into contempt—with not so much as a feather in his cap." † When, shortly after the Duke's retirement from office, he happened accidentally to encounter Lord Bute, the latter is said to have sarcastically congratulated him on his release from the responsibilities and cares of office—cares which, in fact, had constituted the happiness of his life. The Duke's reply was not without both point and dignity;—"Yes, yes! my Lord," he said, "I am an old man; but yesterday was my birth-day, and I remembered that it was just at my age that Cardinal Fleury *began* to be Prime Minister of France." ‡

In the mean time, the King's domestic life appears to have been far from a happy one. His former excellent spirits had evidently forsaken him. Instead of that easy, good-natured, ingratiating familiarity, which had hitherto distinguished him in his intercourse with others, his manner had become distant and cold, and his countenance

* Ellis's Orig. Letters, vol. iv. p. 445.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 454.

‡ The Duke entered on his seventieth year on the 21st July, about seven weeks after he resigned office. Cardinal Fleury was born 22 June 1653, became first Minister of France in June 1726, and died 29 January 1743, in his ninetieth year.

expressive of melancholy. It was evident to all who approached him that his mind was ill at ease.* Shutting himself up with the Queen either at Buckingham House or else at Richmond Lodge, and approached by no one but domestic servants, it was seldom that—except at a Drawing-room or at a Levee—he was visible to his subjects. His younger brothers were kept in the same rigid seclusion by their mother. One of them, Prince William, afterwards Duke of Gloucester, being asked whether he had not lately been confined by a cold—"Confined?" he answered; "why, yes! but without any cold."† The King's loss of spirits was attributed by his subjects to the gloomy condition of public affairs, and his seclusion, whether justly or not, to the influence of the Princess Dowager. But whatever the cause may have been, this system of exclusiveness—far more suited to the habits of an Oriental monarch than becoming the King of a free and affectionate people—naturally increased the unpopularity which his dismissal of Pitt, and the favours heaped by him upon Bute, had already entailed upon the youthful sovereign.

> "Our sons some slave of greatness may behold,
> Cast in the genuine Asiatic mould,
> Who of these realms shall condescend to know
> No more than he can spy from Windsor's brow."
>
> *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers.*

And again, in the same clever poem—

> "Be these the rural pastimes that attend
> Great Brunswick's leisure. These shall best unbend
> His royal mind, whene'er, from state withdrawn,
> He treads the velvet of his Richmond lawn.
> These shall prolong his Asiatic dream,
> Though Europe's balance trembles on its beam."

If the King was unhappy, the young Queen appears to have been even more so. Such was the thraldom, according to Walpole, in which she was kept by the Princess Dowager, that for some time after her marriage her condition was little

* Hardwicke Papers, Harris, vol. iii. p. 283.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 159.

preferable to a gilded captivity. Not only, he tells us, were her most innocent pleasures interfered with, but a spy was set to watch her actions.* Much as she delighted in society, the ladies of her household were forbidden to converse with her. At Mecklenburg card-playing had been her favourite amusement; yet now with the exception of monotonous *tête-à-tête* games with the King in private, the diversion was denied to her. Out of her deep affection for her husband she endured her thraldom uncomplainingly; yet, says Walpole, "now and then a sigh stole out, and now and then she attempted, though in vain, to enlarge her restraint." Nevertheless to gratify her wishes and render her happy was evidently the earnest object of her consort's heart. Among other pleasing acts of attention he took a pleasure in presenting her with jewels and in seeing her wearing them. Once only did she beg to be allowed to lay them on one side. It had been one of the injunctions of her late mother, whom she had lost only a few weeks previously, that, on the first occasion of her being a communicant at the Altar as Queen of England, she should receive the Sacrament unadorned with jewels, and without parade. "The King," says Walpole, "indulged her; but Lady Augusta carrying this tale to her mother, the Princess obliged

* This person is said to have been the once celebrated Miss Katherine Dashwood, the "Delia" of the Love Elegies of James Hammond, and an intimate friend of Lord Bute. She was a ward of John Lord Hervey—the "Lord Fanny" of Pope's satire—who, being prejudiced against Hammond on account of his political principles, refused his consent to her marriage with the poet, who died disordered in his intellects, on the 7th of June, 1742. As a quarter of a century had elapsed since Miss Dashwood had been last a denizen of the Court, as Woman of the Bedchamber to the queen of George the Second, her re-appearance at Court after so long an interval naturally created some sensation. "It is comical," writes Walpole, "to see Kitty Dashwood, the famous old beauty of the Oxfordshire Jacobites, living in the palace as Duenna to the Queen. She and Mrs. Boughton, Lord Lyttelton's ancient Delia, are revived again in a young court that never heard of them."—*Walpole's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 435. Edition, 1857.

> "When Delia on the plain appears,
> Awed by a thousand tender fears
> I would approach, but dare not move;
> Tell me, my heart, if this be love?"—*Lyttelton.*

the King to insist on the jewels, and the poor young Queen's tears and terrors could not dispense with her obedience." *

A dangerous illness with which the King was attacked about this time—an illness probably of longer duration and of a more delicate and distressing character than the Court deemed it prudent to disclose—may have occasioned much of that gloom which in the summer of this year clouded the hearth of Majesty. "Your account of the King alarms me," writes Lord Hardwicke to Lord Royston early in June, "and makes me impatient for the next account. I fear his Majesty was very ill, for physicians do not deal so roughly with such patients without necessity. God grant him a speedy recovery." † Walpole also writes, on the 20th June, 1762;—"Have you not felt a pang in your royal capacity? Seriously, it has been dreadful, but the danger is over. The King had one of the last of these strange and universally epidemic colds, which, however, have seldom been fatal. He had a violent cough and oppression on his breast, which he concealed, just as I had; but my life was of no consequence, and having no Physicians in Ordinary, I was cured in four nights by James's powders, without bleeding. The King was blooded seven times and had three blisters. Thank God, he is safe, and we have escaped a confusion beyond what was ever known, but on the accession of the Queen of Scots." ‡

The King's sudden illness, in fact, threatened the public with a crisis of peculiar difficulty and danger. The Queen was known to be in the family-way, yet unhappily no provision had been made for a Regency. Had the King's illness, therefore, proved fatal, great indeed would have been the confusion. According to the old axiom "the King never dies;" yet here was a contingency in which the Sovereign

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 71, 72, 73.
† Hardwicke Papers, Harris, vol. iii. p. 283.
‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 1. Ed. 1857.

might be no more, and yet his heir and successor be still unborn. "Fitzakerley," * writes Walpole—"who has lived long enough to remember nothing but the nonsense of the law, maintained, that, as the King never dies, the Duke of York must have been proclaimed King, and then been unproclaimed again on the Queen's delivery. We have not even any standing law for the Regency. But I need not paint to you all the difficulties there would have been in our situation." †

Fortunately, the King's youth and excellent constitution befriended him. Moreover, not only had the nation the satisfaction of seeing him restored to health, but, a few weeks afterwards, the birth of an heir to the throne put an end to their fears in respect to a disputed succession. The Queen was taken in labour, at St. James's Palace, on the 12th of August 1762, and soon after seven o'clock in the morning was delivered of her first-born child, afterwards King George the Fourth; "the Princess of Wales, several Lords of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and the

* Nicholas Fitzakerley, though described by Walpole as a "tiresome Tory lawyer," would seem in his social hours to have been a tolerably jovial companion. Some verses of the day, the authorship of which was attributed to Pulteney, Earl of Bath, accost him;—

"How oft, dear Faz! have we been told
That Paul and Faz are both grown old
By young and wanton lasses!
Then since our time is now so short,
Let us enjoy the only sport
Of tossing off our glasses.

From White's we'll move the expensive scene,
And steal away to Richmond Green:
There, free from noise and riot,
Polly each morn shall fill our tea,
Spread bread and butter, and then we
Each night get drunk in quiet.

Unless perchance Earl Leicester comes
As noisy as a dozen drums," &c., &c.

Sir C. H. Williams' Works, vol. i. p. 244.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 1, Edition, 1857.

Ladies of her Majesty's Bedchamber, being present." * On the 8th of September following, the ceremony of baptism was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the great council-chamber of the palace; the sponsors being the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz, and the Princess Dowager.

Retired as were the King's habits at this, and up to a still later period of his life, we nevertheless discover from time to time evidences of that social benevolence and genial good-humour which, in after years, when he had shaken off his constitutional shyness and diffidence, so entirely gained him the affections of his subjects. Of this amiable character were his well-known affection and reverence for Eton School. Even at this early period, the pride and satisfaction with which we find him conducting the Queen over the venerable seminary, evince the interest which he took in the place. On this occasion, after the usual speeches and ceremonies were over, the King good-naturedly placed the sum of two hundred and thirty pounds in the hands of the Provost, for the purpose of being distributed at his discretion among the scholars.† Many years afterwards—at the commencement of the last of those terrible mental disorders with which Providence thought fit to afflict him—he was standing at one of the windows of his apartments in Windsor Castle with the late Marquis Wellesley—who, like the King, was enthusiastically attached to—

> "——— the schoolboy spot
> We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot"—

when his eye caught a view of the—

> "Distant spires and antique towers,
> That crown the watery glade,
> Where grateful Science still adores
> Her Henry's holy shade."

* Annual Register for 1762, p. 96. See also the Edinburgh Review, vol. xxiii. p. 449.
† Annual Register for 1762, p. 105.

Calling Lord Wellesley's attention to the prospect;—"Look my Lord!" he said, with a tone of reverential affection, "there is the noble school where we were all educated!" * Surrounded by smiles, such as seldom beam but on happy boyish faces—listening to the cheers and acclamations of the young, the joyous, and the loyal—George the Third never appeared so happy or to so much advantage, as when, on a regatta evening, he drove Queen Charlotte in his pony-carriage over the Brocas at Eton, or when, at the close of Montem Day, he was to be seen mingling with the Eton boys in their fancy costumes, on the crowded Terrace at Windsor. More than a century has passed away since he visited Eton in 1762; yet still his name is reverenced there as its kindest patron; still his birth-day, the 4th of June, is celebrated with the same rejoicings as when the King himself delighted to be present. So great, it may be observed, was the interest which the King took in Eton, and such the retentiveness of his memory, that, more than once in after life, he was known to recall to the recollections of the eminent statesmen with whom he became associated, the number of times they had been "sent up for good" at school. †

* From *private information*. Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, Lord Bute, Henry Fox Lord Holland, Lord Sandwich, the Marquis of Granby, Earl Temple, George Grenville, Lord North, Lord Cornwallis, Charles James Fox, Lord Howe, Lord Grenville, Lord Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington, Earl Grey, Canning; in fact almost all the eminent men who held office during the reign of George 3, were educated at Eton.

† Annual Register for 1820, p. 708.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bute appointed Premier—Programme of his policy—Necessity for extraordinary efforts to secure a majority—Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, induced to join the Ministry, and made leader of the House of Commons in place of George Grenville—Terms of the Coalition of Henry Fox with the Court party—Failure of his attempts to obtain Whig support—Wholesale bribery, corruption, and intimidation—Duke of Devonshire, "Prince of the Whigs," dismissed from Office and from the Privy Council—Parliament opened by the King in person—Pitt too ill to attend in his place—Ministers obtain a majority—Pitt's eloquence—His position and power in the House of Commons—Dr. Franklin's opinion of Pitt.

IMMEDIATELY on the resignation of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Bute was advanced to be First Lord of the Treasury; George Grenville was appointed Secretary of
May 29. State in his room; and Sir Francis Dashwood, a dissolute man of pleasure, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Four months
Sep. 22. afterwards Bute was installed a Knight of the Garter, an unmerited distinction which naturally entailed upon him the sarcasms of the wits, and especially of Wilkes—

> "The King gave but one, but t' other Scot, Chartres,*
> All England to hang him would give him both garters;
> And, oh! how the rabble would laugh and would hoot,
> Could they once set a swinging this John Earl of Bute."†

At the same time that the King gave the Garter to Bute, he also conferred a blue riband upon his younger brother, Prince William Henry. "I suppose," said the youngest of

* The notorious Colonel Francis Charteris—

> "Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
> Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres."
>
> *Pope's Essay on the characters of Women.*

† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 487.

the royal brothers, Prince Henry Frederick, "that Mr. Mackenzie * and I shall have green ribands." †

To obtain an honourable and lasting peace—to establish a pure government on a firm basis—and at the same time to strengthen the Royal Prerogative by rendering the Sovereign independent of party-faction, constituted, as we have already mentioned, the primary objects of Bute's Ministerial policy. Owing to the disasters which Pitt had inflicted on the enemies of his country, the first of these objects was rendered a task of no very difficult attainment. Accordingly, under the auspices of the Duke of Bedford, who was despatched as Ambassador to Paris, the preliminaries of a Treaty of Peace were agreed upon with the Nov. 3. French Government, the conditions of which, at any other period in the annals of Great Britain, would have been regarded as highly to her honour. The consent of Parliament, however, had yet to be obtained for the ratification of those conditions; and, accordingly, as the day drew near on which the two Houses were to re-assemble, Bute began to tremble, as much for the success of his favourite policy, as for the consequences which might personally befall himself. Not only were the preliminary articles of the Treaty certain to be the subject of furious opposition and stormy debate—not only must he be prepared to encounter the vindictive taunts and accusations of the powerful and exasperated Whig phalanx arrayed under the awful banner of Pitt—but, as he well knew, he must make up his mind to be assailed by the prejudices, the hatred, and the rage of the great popular party, throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Moreover, in addition to these grounds for disquiet, doubts of his own talents, and capacity for business, had begun to force themselves on the conviction of the lately so self-opinionated and self-confident Minister. He was "inexperienced;" he

* Lord Bute's only brother, the Hon. James Stuart Mackenzie.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 159, 160.

admitted to Charles Yorke on the 3rd of September. "The weight and labour of his office," he said, "were too much for him."* But still stronger are the complaints which, on the 11th of October, we find him pouring forth to his "dear George," as he usually addresses George Grenville at this time. It had been entirely, he said, in compliance with the earnest entreaties of his Sovereign that he had been induced to accept the seals of Secretary of State and afterwards the Premiership. He had soon become tired of the former post, and was now heartily weary of the other. For some weeks past, he said, he had been urging the King to allow him to retire into private life, but so afflicted was His Majesty, whenever he repeated the entreaty, that for hours afterwards he had known him sit with his head reclining on his arm, without speaking a word. Moreover, added Bute, a lady of the highest rank—one who was most deservedly dear to the King†—had preferred her most earnest solicitations to him to restore tranquillity to the mind of his royal master, by remaining at his post, and most reluctantly he had yielded to their several importunities. Certainly, neither with justice to his Sovereign nor with credit to himself, could Bute, at this critical period, have taken a step, which must necessarily have consigned the young King to the thraldom of the "Great Families." Accordingly, as Bute told Grenville, he had resolved to confront the worst, in hopes, in due time, of being able to rescue from the domination of a "wicked faction" the most amiable Prince that ever sat upon a throne.

In this state of affairs, the whole attention of the Court was turned on the means of obtaining an effectual majority in Parliament. Unless this object could be obtained, neither the Peace, nor the deliverance of the King from the tyranny of the Great Houses, nor perhaps the immunity of

* Hardwicke Papers, by Harris, vol. iii. p. 308.

† It does not appear whether this lady was the Queen or the Princess-Dowager. Grenville was inclined to think it was the former.

Bute from proscription, could by any possibility be guaranteed. But, by what means, asked the perplexed Minister of himself, was this desirable consummation to be effected? Former Ministers, it is true, had made little scruple of carrying their measures through Parliament by means of bribery and corruption. But how could Bute have the face to resort to similar expedients? With what conscience could the immaculate politician—he whose boast it had been that Parliamentary purity should be the pride and mainstay of his Administration—imitate the foul practices which had been a disgrace to preceding Governments? In the opinion of the Court, however, necessity knew no law, and accordingly it was resolved, by means however unconstitutional and however costly, to organise the required majority. The first and great difficulty lay in the procurement of an agent sufficiently fearless, unprincipled, and skilled in the arts of political corruption, to carry into successful operation the desperate service required of him by his employers. These qualifications, however, were in Bute's opinion to be met with in Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, a statesman who, on account of the conspicuous part which, in his day, he played both in society and in politics, demands a passing notice at our hands.

Henry Fox was a younger son of Sir Stephen Fox,* who, during the exile of Charles the Second, had held the

* Of Sir Stephen Fox's two elder sons, Charles, a godson of Charles 2, died without issue in 1713 : Stephen was created Earl of Ilchester. It used to be related as a remarkable fact by the late Lady Holland, that notwithstanding nearly two centuries had passed away since the execution of Charles 1, there was still living a great-grandson of the page who attended him on the scaffold.—*From private information.* The page in attendance was Sir Stephen Fox : the great-grandson alluded to was Henry Stephen, third Earl of Ilchester. Nearly twenty years elapsed after the death of Lady Holland, yet, curiously enough, the anecdote still held good as late as January, 1865 ; not, indeed, in reference to the third Earl, but to his brother, William Thomas, the fourth Earl. Lady Holland might have mentioned, as a still more remarkable circumstance, that between two of the most important events in the lives of the two brothers, Charles and Stephen, an interval of no fewer than seventy-seven years should have taken place. Charles was appointed Joint Paymaster of the Forces in December 1679 ; Stephen was created Earl of Ilchester in June 1756.

unprofitable appointment of Cofferer of the Household to that monarch, but who, after the Restoration, advanced himself by his industry, his talents, and his virtues, to a high place in the favour of two successive Sovereigns. The younger Fox was educated at Eton, where he was the schoolfellow of his future rival for fame and power, William Pitt. Another of their Eton contemporaries was George Grenville, who, however, was nearly four years younger than either Fox or Pitt. The youth of Henry Fox, very different from that of his father, had been principally distinguished by dissipation, wild frolic, and extravagance. Libertine, however, as he was, the desire of knowledge, a taste for the classical writings of antiquity, and a love of the fine arts, went far to preserve his character from entire reprobation. No one called in question either his natural talents or his administrative abilities. As an orator, his speeches were remarkable rather for close reasoning, for sound argument, for quickness in reply and keenness of repartee, than for that brilliant and overpowering flow of diction, metaphor, and invective, which distinguished the orations of his rival, Pitt. "Fox," writes Walpole, "always spoke to the question, Pitt to the passions; Fox to carry the question, Pitt to raise himself: Fox pointed out; Pitt lashed the errors of his antagonists: Pitt's talents were likely to make him soonest, Fox's to keep him Prime Minister longest."

In private life it would have been difficult to discover a more delightful companion than Fox. His wit was playful and sparkling; his conversational powers considerable.

> "Such are the nights that I have seen of yore;
> Such are the nights that I shall see no more!
> When Winnington and Fox, with flow of soul,
> With sense and wit, drove round the cheerful bowl.
> Our hearts were opened, and our converse free,
> But now they both are lost, quite lost to me.
> One to a mistress gives up all his life,
> And one from me flies wisely to his wife." *

* Sir C. Hanbury Williams, Works, vol. ii. p. 60.

Frank and engaging manners, a singular sweetness of disposition, and a temper which it was almost impossible to ruffle, had, up to a late period of Fox's life, obtained for him a legion of friends. He was a kind and attached husband, and as a father was indulgent even to weakness. Unfortunately, however, these amiable qualities were obscured by other faults besides personal profligacy. If he was a staunch friend, he was also a bitter enemy. To those who opposed him in politics, he showed himself—more especially towards the close of his political career—cruel, imperious, and unforgiving. Reckless as he had formerly been in wasting his health and his fortune, during the last years of his life he became singularly niggard of both. The bitter impromptu lines, suggested to Gray by the sight of Fox's favourite, but desolate, marine residence at Kingsgate, in Kent, are probably familiar to the reader;—

"Old, and abandoned by each venal friend,
Here Holland formed the pious resolution
To smuggle a few years, and strive to mend
A ruined character and constitution.

On this congenial spot he fixed his choice;
Earl Goodwin trembled for his neighbouring sand;
Here sea-gulls scream, and cormorants rejoice,
And mariners, though shipwrecked, dread to land.

Here reign the blustering north and blighting east;
No tree is heard to whisper, bird to sing;
Yet Nature could not furnish out the feast;
And he invokes new horrors still to bring.

Here mouldering fanes and battlements arise;
Turrets and arches nodding to their fall;
Unpeopled monast'ries delude our eyes,
And mimic desolation covers all." &c.

Whether Lord Holland was guilty of the sweeping peculations with which he has been charged—whether, in the nervous language of the Corporation of the City of London, he was really a "public defaulter of unaccounted millions"—may reasonably be questioned. On the other hand, that

he availed himself in a very undue manner of the perquisites and advantages of office—that he enriched himself by means which a high-minded statesman would have blushed even in contemplating—can scarcely, we think, admit of a doubt.

The personal importance which Fox had deservedly achieved by means of his eminent abilities, he had afterwards improved by marrying Lady Georgiana Caroline Lennox, sister of Charles, third Duke of Richmond. The match, which was a runaway one, had originally given deep offence to the House of Lennox, but a reconciliation had long since taken place between the Duke and his plebeian brother-in-law. "*His* father," writes Walpole, "was a footman; *her* great-grandfather a King. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!*" *

Such were the antecedents of that irregular man of genius, to whom the Court proposed to entrust the business of carrying the Treaty of Peace through Parliament. "We must call in bad men," said the King to George Grenville, "to govern bad men." † Properly speaking, it was Grenville to whom, as Leader of the House of Commons, the task of vindicating the Peace against the attacks of the Opposition should have been committed. To ensure success, however, needed the combined qualities of tact, good temper, eloquence, and complete agreement with his colleagues; none of which requirements Grenville was at all likely to bring into play. On the contrary, however considerable may have been his abilities, not only were his manners unconciliating, and his elocution usually tedious and unimpressive, but there were one or two articles in the Treaty of Peace on which he and Bute were known to be at variance. Moreover, although Grenville, like Pitt and more than one other statesman of the time, had no great objection to profit indirectly by the corrupt practices of others, he was a most unlikely person to risk his reputation for

* Walpole's Letters, vol. i. p. 303, Ed. 1857.

† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 452.

honesty by directly resorting to those practices himself. Fox, on the other hand, was singularly daring, insinuating, and unscrupulous. Utterly regardless of the opinion of the world, and repudiating the very existence of political virtue, when he undertook the dirty work required of him, it was with the full conviction that there was scarcely a member of Parliament who was not as likely to be influenced by unworthy pecuniary considerations as he was himself.

For the purpose of placing Fox in a position to carry out the designs of the Government, it was necessary in the first instance to prevail upon George Grenville, not only to exchange his post of Secretary of State for that of First Lord of the Admiralty, but to yield to Fox, whom he detested, the leadership of the House of Commons. To a man so vain, and at the same time of so implacable a nature as Grenville, such a proposition was calculated to give the deepest offence; and accordingly, if Walpole's statement be correct, he listened to it with an "unspeakable astonishment, and with a rage not to be described." * Grenville, however, had many reasons for preferring to put up with the affront, rather than quit the Ministry in disgust. Bute, for instance, had recently flattered him with hopes of his being selected to succeed him in the Premiership,† and it was only by remaining in office that he was likely to attain that great object of his ambition. Moreover, he was fond of official business for its own sake—his private means were not so considerable but that the emoluments of office were of importance to him—and, lastly, had he retired from his post, he must have sat on the Opposition benches with his brother-in-law, Pitt, with whom, not only was he at present on the worst of terms, but whose commanding genius would have thrown him entirely into the shade. It was apparently

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 195.
† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 484.

for these reasons that Grenville was induced to resign the leadership of the House of Commons to Fox, and to remove with his private secretary and his despatch-boxes from Downing Street to the Admiralty. The Seals, thus vacated, were conferred upon the Earl of Halifax; Fox preferring to retain the lucrative post of Paymaster-General instead of accepting the more distinguished one of Secretary of State. "I was with difficulty,"
Oct 13. writes Fox to the Duke of Bedford, "excused from being Secretary of State. The rest was insisted upon, or rather asked, in such terms and in such a manner, that—in short—I was brought to feel it a point of honour to obey." *

Fox had many motives for listening with satisfaction to the overtures of Bute. Obnoxious as he was to the King on account of his private vices, and detested by the Princess-Dowager, with whom he had long been out of favour, it must have been a matter of no trifling self-congratulation to the offended statesman to be thus invited by the Court to join its councils, and to aid his Sovereign in
Oct. 13. his hour of difficulty. "His Majesty," writes Fox, "was in great concern lest a good peace, in a good House of Commons, should be lost, and his authority disgraced for want of a proper person to support his honest measures and keep his closet from that force with which it was so threatened. *I was that person who could do it.*" † Fox, moreover, had long been impatient for a seat in the House of Lords; and accordingly it was stipulated by him, as a reward for the dirty and flagitious work which he was expected to perform, that at the close of his labours he should receive a coronet. Lastly, he was anxious to measure weapons once more with his old antagonist, Pitt. Superior to that illustrious man as a debater, though not as an

* Bedford Corresp. vol. iii. p. 134. † *Ibid.*

orator, and believing himself to be at least his equal in administrative talents, it had been with no ordinary feelings of jealousy and mortification that Fox had seen his rival preferred above himself to the highest position in the State, as well as to the foremost place in the affections of his fellow-countrymen. He now, however, beheld a prospect of better times. What if Parliament could be prevailed upon to cast a censure on the war, and to pronounce the peace to be a wise and righteous measure? In such a case the laurels would be stripped from the brow of his rival. Fox's triumph would be complete. Personally speaking, Fox had everything to gain by a victory, and little to lose by defeat. If successful, he would have the option of either continuing the foremost person in the House of Commons, or else of exchanging the bustle and excitement of St. Stephen's for the easy dignity of the House of Lords. At all events, he would be able to fall back upon his present occupation as Paymaster-General, a post sufficiently lucrative in time of peace, and likely to be still more remunerative in case of a renewal of the war.

In urging Fox to join the Ministry, Bute had doubtless calculated that the intimacy which had long existed between his new colleague and many of the leaders of the Whig party, might be the means of inducing the latter to support the Crown in its present difficulty. Those hopes were certainly entertained by Fox himself, and were as certainly disappointed. The first person to whom he applied for assistance was his former powerful friend and patron, the Duke of Cumberland. The Duke, however, not only received him with coldness but listened to his overtures with manifest disdain. The result of an interview with the Duke of Devonshire was not more satisfactory. He trusted, said the Duke, that their private friendship might continue undisturbed, but with Fox, in his new

capacity of a Minister of the Crown, he must decline all communication whatever. Even the unscrupulous old Duke of Newcastle, when appealed to by Fox, is said to have denounced, in scornful terms, the unnatural coalition between his former colleague and the Court.

Thus disappointed in his appeals to the great Whig lords, Fox proceeded to employ his solicitations, his arguments, his bribes, and his promises, in other and less scrupulous quarters. Reckless of consequences, and inflamed, as we have said, by the powerful motives of self-interest, ambition, and revenge, he entered upon his scandalous task with all that earnestness and energy, which was to be expected from his fearless and unprincipled character. Without the slightest apparent compunction, he plunged at once into a wholesale system of bribery and corruption, with a tithe of which even the jobber Newcastle would have shrunk from sullying his Administration. Places were recklessly multiplied in the royal household, and pensions no less profligately and unmeritedly conferred. "Leaving the grandees to their ill-humour," writes Walpole, "Fox directly attacked the separate members of the House of Commons, and with so little decorum on the part of either buyer or seller, that a shop was publicly opened at the Pay Office, whither the members flocked, and received the wages of their venality in bank-bills, even to so low a sum as two hundred pounds." It was subsequently admitted by Martin, Secretary of the Treasury,* that no less a sum than twenty-five thousand pounds had been issued from the public

* Samuel Martin, a West Indian, had formerly held an appointment in the household of Frederick Prince of Wales. He is now best remembered from his duel with Wilkes in 1763, and Churchill's bitter verses on him in "The Duellist:"—

"May he!—but words are all too weak
The feelings of my heart to speak;—
May he!—oh, for a noble curse
Which might his very marrow pierce!—
The general contempt engage,
And be the MARTIN of his age!"

exchequer in one morning for the basest purposes of corruption.*

In addition to this thorough-going system of political venality and bribery, Fox made no scruple of resorting to intimidation even in the highest quarters. The great Whig lords continuing refractory, Fox soon made it manifest to them that the Court was not less ready to punish opposition than to reward apostacy. The first assault upon the great aristocratic stronghold was made in the person of the Duke of Devonshire—the "Prince of the Whigs," as he was styled by the Princess-Dowager—who, notwithstanding his high rank and character and the long-tried devotion of his family to the House of Brunswick, was suddenly and ignominiously dismissed from his post of Lord Chamberlain.† It was on his return from a short visit to the country, Oct. 28. that the Duke repaired to the palace to pay his respects to his Sovereign. Availing himself of his privilege as a great Officer of State, he at once proceeded to the back-stairs, where he desired the page-in-waiting to inform His Majesty that he was in attendance. "Tell him," said the King, peremptorily, "that I will not see him!" The page was thunderstruck, and hesitated. "Go to him," said the King, "and tell him in these very words, that I will not see him." Such a message from his Sovereign was of course tantamount to a dismissal; and accordingly the Duke, still more astonished than the page, desired to know to whom it was His Majesty's commands that he should deliver the Chamberlain's key? "Tell him," said the King "that orders shall be given him on the subject." Instead of waiting for these

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 199.

† William, fourth Duke of Devonshire, K.G., had formerly held the appointment of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. "The late Duke of Devonshire," writes Lord Waldegrave, "had great credit with the Whigs, being a man of strict honour, true courage, and unaffected affability. He was sincere, humane, and generous; plain in his manners, negligent in his dress; had sense, learning, and modesty, with solid rather than showy parts."—*Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs*, p. 26. The Duke died 2nd October, 1764, at the age of 44.

orders, the Duke hurried to his own house, and, having snatched up the key, repaired with it to the Secretary of State, Lord Egremont, into whose hands he thrust it, almost overpowered by his feelings. On the following morning, the Duke's brother, Lord George Cavendish, resigned his post of Comptroller of the Household, and his brother-in-law, the Earl of Besborough, that of joint Postmaster-General.*

In justification of the King's treatment of the Duke of Devonshire on this occasion, it was insisted by the courtiers that His Majesty had just and ample grounds for being incensed against his Grace. Not only, they said, had the Duke for some time past habitually absented himself from the meetings of the Privy Council, but he was even now, they believed, engaged in caballing with the Duke of Newcastle against the Government. Unluckily, that very morning, the King, on his way from Richmond, had himself seen the two Dukes together in the same chariot.† But whatever grounds the young King may have had for resentment, his anger was evidently not a mere ebullition of the moment. Six days afterwards, at a meeting of the Privy Council, the King, to the astonishment of the members present, not only ordered the Duke's dismissal from the list of Privy Councillors, but actually erased his name with his own hand. The following is the entry in the MS. Council Book of the day :

"*At St. James's*, 3 *November*, 1762.—This day His Majesty in Council called for the Council Book, and with

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 200, &c.

† If any faith could be placed in a popular anecdote of the day, it would seem that the repugnance, which the Duke entertained for Lord Bute, induced him on one occasion to be personally wanting in respect to the King. "The mob," writes Lady Temple to her husband, on the 17th December, "have a good story of the Duke of Devonshire; that he went first to light the King, and the King followed leaning upon Lord Bute's shoulder, upon which the Duke of Devonshire turned about, and desired to know *which he was waiting upon?*"—*Grenville Papers*, vol. ii. p. 22.

his own hand struck the name of William Duke of Devonshire out of the List of Privy Councillors." The two last occasions on which similar summary proceedings had taken place had been in the cases of William Pulteney, who was struck off the List in 1731, on account of his political conduct, and of Lord George Sackville, in 1759, in consequence of a sentence of Court-Martial having found him guilty of pusillanimous conduct at the battle of Minden.

As regards the conduct of Fox on this occasion, the fact of his having previously lived on terms of the most friendly intimacy with the Duke of Devonshire naturally subjected him to very heavy animadversions. He wrote, indeed, to the Duke, positively denying that he had had any share in the affronts which had been put upon his Grace, but the Duke, it is said, did not even make a pretence of believing him.* Moreover, the house of Cavendish, to the close of Fox's career, never ceased to resent the indignity which they believed had been offered by him to the head of their family.

In the mean time the emissaries of Fox had been at work in all quarters. For the purpose of securing the desired majority in Parliament, no expedient was left untried and no influential individual overlooked. Some were bribed, and others frightened into submission. The Earl of Orford was tempted with the rangership of St. James's and Hyde Park. Messengers were stationed at the different sea-port towns to waylay the Marquis of Granby on his return from the Continent, and to tempt him with the choice of either the Ordnance or the command of the Army. Marshal Conway, whose integrity rendered him superior to a bribe, was got rid of by being selected to conduct the Army to England; and, lastly, in order to silence the tongue of the King's brother, the Duke of York, whose boyish abuse of Bute and the Scotch appears to have given great offence to

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 202.

the King, his royal highness was despatched on an idle expedition to Italy.*

But, unjustifiable as were these proceedings, far more reprehensible was the persecution which was subsequently made to fall upon the heads of those who either opposed, or else refused to support, the Court. The Dukes of Newcastle and Grafton, and the Marquis of Rockingham, were deprived of the Lord-Lieutenancies of their several counties, and but for the personal interposition of Fox, the same insult would have been offered to the Duke of Devonshire. The Duke, however, preferred sharing the fate of his friends to being under an obligation, and consequently flung up his Lieutenancy in disgust.

Still more shameful was the system of oppression which was carried by Fox into the second, and sometimes into the third and fourth ranks of the State. It amounted, in many cases, not only to persecution but to positive cruelty. A Mr. Schultz, who for seven years had been a gentleman of the bedchamber, was dismissed merely because he was without a seat in Parliament; and a worthy and gallant officer, Admiral Forbes, was removed from the Board of Admiralty, to enable Fox to make room for one of his own friends.† Far from being satisfied with dismissing Lord-Lieutenants of counties, and removing Tellers of the Exchequer and Lords of the Admiralty, Fox and his inquisitors extended their searching scrutinies and their inhumanity even to the humblest departments of the State. It was only necessary to ascertain that a clerk in a Government Office owed his situation to being related to an opposition Member of Parliament, or that a Whig opposition Peer had obtained a messenger's place for his wife's footman, or an exciseman's situation for the son of his gamekeeper, and these unfortunate underlings were frequently sent about their business, in order to provide places for the friends

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 208-9, 235. † *Ibid.*, p. 234.

and relatives of the advocates of Peace. "I hope," writes Rigby to his friend the Duke of Bedford, "no military men may be turned out; but I would clear away in the Civil employments." And again the heartless *gourmand* writes, —"I have reason to believe there will be a general *déroute* from the Duke of Grafton's Lieutenancy of the county of Suffolk to the underlings in the Custom House; and I think, if military men are excepted, as I trust they will be, the measure entirely right."* It was happily said on this occasion that Bute had turned out every one whom Whig influence had brought into office, with the exception of the King.† A more nefarious and cruel system of politics could scarcely be conceived. A poor man in Sussex, who had distinguished himself by his gallantry in a desperate affray with smugglers, was deprived of his pension for no better reason than that it had been procured for him by the Duke of Grafton. A still meaner affront was offered to the house of Cavendish. A lady of that name, the widow of an Admiral,‡ instead of having been placed on the pension-list at the time of her husband's decease, had been appointed housekeeper of one of the public offices. Probably her place was wanted for another. At all events, Fox's agents chose to presume that her late husband had been related to the Duke of Devonshire, and accordingly orders were given for her instant dismissal.§

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 171.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 50, *note*.

‡ Admiral Philip Cavendish. He died in 1743.

§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 233–5. Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 567, 10th edition. Nine years after this cruel persecution, Horace Walpole writes;—"On the 10th of April, 1771, when Lord North opened the Budget, T. Townshend reflected on Lord Holland as author of the proscriptions at the beginning of the reign. Charles Fox said he did not believe his father had any hand in them; but if he had it *was right to break the power of the Aristocracy that had governed in the name of the late King*. Charles Fox asked me afterwards in private if the accusation against his father was just? I replied I could not but say it was."—*Memoirs of the Reign of George* 3, vol. iv. p. 309. Charles Fox, let it be remembered, was in 1771 a Lord of the Admiralty, and a Tory. See also Lord Rockingham's Speech in the House of Lords, January 22, 1770.—*Parliamentary History*, vol. xvi. col. 742.

The amount of misery, which was entailed on private families by the policy of Bute and the sweeping brutality of Fox, it would be difficult to exaggerate. For the conduct of the former, some slight excuse presents itself. With all his faults of incompetency and self-sufficiency, and oppressive and cruel as his policy may have been, he was at least actuated by the conscientious conviction that he was working out certain grand principles which were to emancipate the Crown from the domination of a selfish and tyrannical oligarchy, and to deliver his country from the horrors of an unprofitable war. But for Fox, apparently, no such excuses can be discovered. Ambition, revenge, and the desire of a coronet, seem to have been the ruling incentives for his conduct. "Fox," said the Duke of Cumberland, "has deceived me grossly, for I thought him good-natured, but in all these transactions he has shown the bitterest revenge and inhumanity."*

The Court had been promised a triumph by Fox, and he did not disappoint them. As the day appointed for the meeting of Parliament drew near, the mingled feelings of interest and curiosity, which had for some time prevailed throughout the country, increased almost to intensity. At length, on the 25th of November, Parliament assembled. On that day the King on his way to Westminster was received by the populace with an ominous silence, while Bute on the same occasion was not only hissed and pelted, but on his return encountered much rougher usage. "To avoid the like treatment he had met in going," writes Rigby, "he returned in a hackney-chair; but the mob discovered him, followed him, broke the glasses of the chair, and, in short, by threats and menaces, put him, very reasonably, in great fear. If they had once overturned the chair, he might very soon have been demolished."† Fortu-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 241.
† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 160.

nately for him, affairs within the walls of Parliament went more smoothly than without. On the 30th the preliminaries of peace were laid before both Houses, and in each House it was decided to take them into consideration on the 9th of December. One name—the magic name of Pitt—was now on every lip. To Pitt alone the great masses of the people looked for delivery from the tyranny and oppression which they were told were impending over them. From his eloquence alone they hoped for a victory over the Court. But, to the dismay of the popular party no less than to the satisfaction of the Court, Pitt was ill—too ill, it was whispered in political circles, to render it likely that he would be able to take a part in the approaching contest. Under these circumstances, Nicolson Calvert, Member for Tewkesbury, supported by other friends of Pitt, moved for an adjournment of the House of Commons till such time as the great statesman should be able to attend in his place. The motion, however, was made to little purpose. Ministers put forth all their strength to effect its defeat; the result being that they carried their point by an overwhelming majority of two hundred and thirteen votes against seventy-four. Dec. 1.

Unquestionably Pitt in his place in Parliament was what Lord Chesterfield described him—"*ipse agmen*, a host in himself."* He was gifted by nature with almost all the qualities which are requisite to constitute a great orator. His figure was imposing and graceful; his eye was singularly eloquent and full of fire; his features were capable of every variety of expression; his full, rich, silvery voice was no less capable of every variety of intonation. Great, however, as were his natural advantages as an orator, he was not without his defects. His style was occasionally too florid and his action too theatrical. His speeches were at

* Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 353.

times wanting in close reasoning and acute arguments; his expositions were occasionally prolix and verbose. As a debater, he was certainly inferior to more than one of his contemporaries, and in the art of reply he was confessedly deficient. But, on the other hand, his eloquence was distinguished by passionate and heart-stirring appeals to the feelings; by bold flights of fancy; by striking and appropriate metaphors; by varied and copious knowledge; by the occasional and happy introduction of anecdote; by animated allusions to past historical events; by clear and manly statements of his views and sentiments; and, lastly, when it suited his purpose, by fierce denunciations and bitter invectives. To these qualities must be added the evidence which his speeches afforded of a noble and generous elevation of sentiment; a loathing of all that is mean and sordid; and a deep appreciation of all that is good and beautiful.

In powers of invective Pitt was without a rival. In such terror, indeed, was he held, by the House of Commons, that usually a mere glance of his eye, whether expressive of contempt, defiance, or aversion, was sufficient to daunt the boldest. At other times, when the offence given him was very great, it was his practice to bear down upon the culprit with such a vehemence of indignation, contemptuous ridicule, and insulting sarcasm, that the exhibition is said to have been almost terrifying. On one occasion, for instance, after having spoken in the House of Commons without receiving a reply, he was slowly walking out of the House when, just as he reached the lobby-door, his ear caught the words—"I rise to reply to the right honourable member"—words delivered by a member who usually stood in especial awe of him, and who would never have dreamed of addressing the House, but that he imagined himself to be relieved of the presence of the magician. Pitt turned round, and, as he walked leisurely back to his place, repeated with formidable deliberation from Virgil—

"At Danaum proceres, Agamemnoniæque phalanges,
Ut videre virum, fulgentiaque arma per umbras,
Ingenti trepidare metu : pars vertere terga,
Ceu quondam petiere rates ; pars tollere vocem
Exiguam : inceptus clamor frustratur hiantes."*

Æneid, lib. vi., ver. 489.

The *vox exigua* was at once hushed. Pitt, on reaching his seat, looking disdainfully at the discomfited delinquent, exclaimed, "*Now* let me hear what the honourable member has to say to me!" Butler, who relates this anecdote in his "Reminiscences," inquired of his informant, who was present, whether the House did not laugh at the ridiculous figure cut by the unfortunate member. "No," replied the other; "we were all too much overawed to laugh."† Wilkes has borne witness to the "keen lightnings" which flashed from Pitt's eyes. "They spoke," he said, "the haughty fiery soul before his lips had uttered a syllable."

Pitt's set and studied speeches were usually failures. Such for instance, was the case when he delivered his prepared eulogium on the death of Wolfe—an occasion on which his contemporaries had anticipated an outburst of eloquence worthy alike of the living and of the dead. On the contrary, it was vapid and commonplace. It was only, in fact, when he spoke from the impulse of the moment, and when he was entirely natural, that his eloquence blazed forth in its full splendour. It was usually some merely accidental circumstance—the ironical laugh of a political opponent, the expression of some illiberal sentiment, or some imagined affront to himself or to his country—which elicited from him those impas-

* "——Appalled, dismayed,
The hostile chiefs the god-like man surveyed.
Some turned and fled, astonished at the view,
As when before him to their fleets they flew.
Some raised a cry; the fluttering accents hung
And died imperfect on the trembling tongue."

Pitt's Translation of the Æneid.

† Butler's Reminiscences, pp. 153–4.

sioned outbursts of eloquence, on which his great fame as an orator mainly rests. On such occasions it was, that his ideas flowing faster than his words, he gave vent to those heart-stirring appeals to the patriotism of his listeners, those withering denunciations of the living, and mournful and eloquent panegyrics on the dead, which half impressed his audience with the conviction that he was an inspired being.

No finer debate was ever listened to in the House of Commons, than on the occasion when, in the month of November, 1755, the well-known "Single-Speech" Hamilton, achieved his first and last great parliamentary success. George Grenville had far surpassed himself in a speech of uncommon merit, and, after him, William Murray, afterwards Lord Mansfield, had delivered a masterpiece of artful and jesuitical eloquence, when there arose a young man whose features were almost new to the House, and whose voice was now for the first time raised within its walls. His articulation was strong and clear; his delivery spirited; his manner had all the ease of an habitual and accomplished debater. The speech which he delivered was full of antithesis, and his antitheses were full of argument. He proved, moreover, to be as ready in reply as he had been fluent in delivery. "He spoke for the first time," writes Walpole, who was present, "and was at once perfection." This person was William Gerard Hamilton. "You will ask me," adds Walpole, "what could be beyond this? Nothing; but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He spoke at past one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes. There was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short more astonishing perfections, than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides. He ridiculed my Lord Hillsborough, crushed poor Sir George, terrified the Attorney, lashed my Lord Granville, painted my Lord of Newcastle, attacked

Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the Duke." * It was on this occasion that Pitt—in comparing the unnatural coalition between Newcastle and Fox to the junction of the Rhone and the Saone—delivered one of his most celebrated metaphors. "At Lyons," he said, "I was taken to see the place where the two rivers meet; the one gentle, feeble, languid, and though languid, yet of no depth; the other a boisterous and impetuous torrent. But, different as they are, they meet at last."

Of the famous orations of Pitt, fragments only, with one exception,† have been handed down to us. Those fragments, however, are worth one of the missing Books of the "Fairy Queen" which he loved so well. We are indebted for their preservation to the forcible language, the epigrammatic point and singular felicity of expression, which, combined with his half-inspired majesty of look and manner, so impressed themselves on the minds of his listeners as to enable them to carry away his words in their memories, doubtless to be repeated over and over again to their friends and acquaintances. True it is that, in forming our estimate of Pitt's oratorical powers, we are compelled to draw largely on tradition. Nevertheless, from the exquisite specimens of his eloquence which have been handed down to us, as well as from the extraordinary effect which we know that he produced on the minds of his contemporaries, it would perhaps not be paying him too high a compliment were we to compare him, if not as a debater, at least as an orator, with the greatest masters of eloquence, whether of ancient or of modern times.

Pitt's peculiar method of crushing an adversary in the House of Commons may be illustrated by the following anecdote. Mr. Morton, Chief Justice of Chester, a

* Walpole's Letters, vol. ii. p. 484. Ed. 1857. "Sir George" means Sir George Lyttelton; "the Duke," the Duke of Cumberland.

† On the employment of Indians in the American War. It is said to have been revised and corrected by Pitt himself.

barrister of some eminence, happened, in the course of a speech, to introduce the words, "King, Lords, and Commons—" to which he added, with his glance fixed pointedly on Pitt, "or, as that right honourable gentleman would call them, Commons, Lords, and King." Astounded at his boldness, Pitt deliberately rose from his seat, and called him to order. "I have frequently," he said, "heard in this House doctrines which have surprised me; but now my blood runs cold. I desire the words of the honourable member may be taken down." The Clerks of the House having taken them down—"Bring them to me!" he said, in a voice of thunder. Morton by this time appears to have been frightened out of his senses, and began to stammer out his apologies. He meant nothing, he said; indeed he meant nothing. Pitt sank his voice almost to a whisper. "I do not wish," he said, "to push the matter further." Then, assuming a louder tone of voice, he added—"The moment a man acknowledges his error, he ceases to be guilty. I have a great regard for the honourable member, and as an instance of that regard, I give him this advice" —here he paused for a few moments, and then fixing upon the delinquent a look of withering contempt, he added—"When that member *means* nothing, I recommend him to *say* nothing." * On another occasion, when Sir William Young happened to interrupt him during one of his speeches by calling out, "Question, question," Pitt fixed on him the same look of indescribable scorn. "Pardon, Mr. Speaker," he said, "my agitation; but when that member calls for the question, I fear I hear the knell of my country's ruin." † It was observed by the celebrated Dr. Franklin, that he had

* Butler's Reminiscences, pp. 152-3.

† *Ibid*, p. 153. "It is related," writes Lord Brougham, "that once in the House of Commons he began a speech with the words,—'Sugar, Mr. Speaker,'—and then perceiving a smile to pervade the audience, he paused, looked fiercely around, and with a loud voice, rising in its notes and swelling into vehement anger, he is said to have pronounced again the word 'Sugar!' three times; and

sometimes met with eloquence without wisdom, and often with wisdom without eloquence; but in Mr. Pitt only had he seen them both united, and then both, he thought, in the highest degree.*

having thus quelled the house, and extinguished every appearance of levity or laughter, turned round and disdainfully asked, — 'Who will laugh at sugar now!'" —*Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 34. Ed. 1858.

* Franklin's Works, vol. i. p. 494, 3rd Edition.

CHAPTER IX.

Great Popular excitement—Debate in Parliament on Preliminaries of Peace—Pitt, though seriously ill, speaks on the question—Triumph of the Government—Exultation of the Court—Bute personally unpopular—Financial difficulties of the Government—Sir Francis Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his Budget—Resignation of Bute—His character and disposition—His patronage of Literature, Science, and Art—Bute's intimacy with the Princess of Wales—Resignation of Fox—Fox created Baron Holland.

THE 9th of December—the day fixed upon for the discussion of the Preliminaries of the Peace—at length arrived. Outside, as well as within the walls of Parliament, impatience and curiosity were raised to the highest pitch. Palace Yard was crowded by dense masses of people who, as Bute and the advocates of the Peace from time to time made their appearance, greeted them with yells and execrations. It was still a matter of uncertainty whether Pitt would be well enough to be present, and the doubt increased the general excitement. The eleventh hour had arrived and the debate had already commenced, and yet no sign of the approach of the "Great Commoner" had gladdened the hearts of his friends. Only too well they were aware, that unless upheld by his presence and aided by his eloquence, any crusade against the Court must prove a fruitless one, and, accordingly, despondency was beginning to take possession of their hearts. In the mean time, within the walls of the House of Commons the friends of Government found themselves breathing more freely. Already they had begun to believe them-

selves exempt for a season from the bitter taunts, the fierce denunciations, and the contemptuous sneers of their great political opponent. Already, to their imaginations, the majority on which they had calculated was swelled into an overwhelming triumph, when suddenly there arose from the dense crowd in Palace Yard a shout of exultation, which pealed through every part of the ancient palace of the Confessor. The voice of the member who was addressing the House was drowned by the noise. The advocates of the Peace were seized with consternation. After the lapse of a few seconds, a concourse of people, shouting and huzzaing, were heard ascending the stairs. The doors of the House were thrown open, and the striking figure of the "Great Commoner"—supported by two attendants, and pale almost to ghastliness—presented itself before the astonished assembly. He was dressed in a suit of black velvet; his legs and thighs were wrapped in flannel; his feet were covered with buskins of black cloth. His servants having set him down within the bar, several of his friends hurried to his assistance, with whose aid and with that of his crutch he reached his accustomed seat. "He had the appearance," writes Walpole, who was present, "of a man determined to die in that cause, and at that hour." The langour which pain had imprinted on his emaciated countenance, the recollection of the great and brilliant services which he had rendered to his country, the place, the occasion, and the attire so well timed and so artistically arranged, made a lasting impression on those who happened to be witnesses of this memorable scene.*

By means of having frequent recourse to cordials, Pitt

* Walpole's George 3, vol. i. pp. 223-4-6. The sick statesman on this occasion was allowed the almost unprecedented indulgence of delivering his sentiments seated; an indulgence which had formerly been accorded to Lord Orrery in December, 1669, and which was afterwards extended to Mr. Wickham, in July, 1805, and to Mr. T. Wyndham in 1811.—*Hatsell's Precedents of Proceedings in the House of Commons*, vol. ii. p. 104.

was enabled to speak for three hours and forty minutes. Notwithstanding, he said, the excruciating tortures to which he was a martyr, he had resolved, at the hazard of his life, to attend Parliament upon that day, in order to lift up his voice, his hand, his arm, against a measure which not only threatened to rob the war of half its glory, but which, in his opinion, was opposed to the best interests of the nation. He beheld, he said, in the proposed Peace Preliminaries the seeds of future hostilities. The Peace would prove an insecure one, inasmuch as it would reinstate France and Spain in their former greatness, and power of doing mischief; it was inadequate, inasmuch as the territorial conquests which Great Britain intended to retain would afford no equivalent for those she proposed to surrender.* Towards the termination of his speech his strength failed him, and he was compelled to desist. Like most of Pitt's premeditated orations, his speech on this occasion was not one of his happiest. It was deficient, indeed, neither in argument, nor in occasional beauties of thought and language; but in many parts it was tedious and uninteresting, and was altogether wanting in that fiery grandeur, and those impassioned bursts of eloquence, which had so often, on less momentous occasions, disconcerted his opponents. His voice, moreover, which had formerly been so thrilling and sonorous as to peal through the furthest lobbies of the old Saxon palace, was now so faint and feeble as at times to be inaudible even in the House itself.† Pitt had no sooner concluded his speech than Fox rose to reply to him, on which, to the infinite surprise of all present, the great orator raised himself from his seat, and with the help of his crutch and the assistance of his friends, withdrew from the assembly. Whether, in thus yielding the battle-ground to his dexterous and unprincipled adversary, Pitt

* Parl. Hist., vol. xxv. pp. 1259–70.
† Walpole's George 3, vol. i. p. 226.

was desirous of conveying an impression to the House that he despised Fox too much to care about waiting to listen to his arguments, or whether, as his biographer supposes, he was really completely exhausted and in "an agony of pain,"* appears to be a matter of doubt. At all events, his withdrawal threw a fatal damp over his party, and left Fox an easy victory. On the illustrious invalid again making his appearance in Palace Yard, the former huzzas were redoubled. As his chariot drove off between the opening masses of people, the crowd, affected by his emaciated appearance, increased their clamour; many of them shouting out, in reference to the length of his speech,—"Three hours and a-half! three hours and a-half!"†

In the House of Commons, the Preliminaries were eventually approved of by a large majority of three hundred and nineteen against sixty-five. In the House of Lords, where Bute agreeably surprised his friends by speaking with admirable good sense, temper, and propriety, there was no division.‡ Not only was he satisfied, said Bute, that all the dearest interests of his country required peace, but, he added, somewhat theatrically, that he trusted that a record of the share which he might have in putting an end to hostilities might be engraved upon his tomb.§

* Thackeray's Life of Lord Chatham, vol. ii. p. 23.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 231.

‡ In the Address which the Lords voted to the King, they thanked him for the "humane disposition and paternal affection to his subjects," which had been shown by him in "putting a safe and honourable end to a burthensome and expensive war."—*Journals of the House of Lords*, vol. xxx. p. 308. The Duke of Cumberland, much as he was prejudiced against Lord Bute, pronounced his speech to have been "one of the finest he ever heard in his life."—*Bedford Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 170.

§ Parl. Hist., vol. xxv. p. 1251. Lord Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. ii. p. 476. This sentimental observation of Lord Bute gave rise to the following epigram, which, at the time, was in everybody's mouth;—

"Say, when will England be from faction freed?
When will domestic quarrels cease?
Ne'er till that wished-for epitaph we read,—
'Here lies the man that made the Peace.'"

Wright's "England under the House of Hanover," vol. i. p. 410.

The Court had achieved a great triumph. The King made no scruple of speaking of himself as one providentially emancipated from an oppressive thraldom; the Princess Dowager was heard to exclaim exultingly—"Now my son *is* King of England!"* The courtiers joined of course in the cry of exultation. His Majesty, they boasted, was at last a King. The Whig magnates—that aristocratic Cabal which for so many years had insolently domineered over their Sovereign—were at last humbled and rendered powerless. The royal prerogative was about to shine out in its proper lustre. In other words, the Court had now the leisure, as well as the money and the power, to carry out its dangerous, however well-intentioned projects. So entire, indeed, was the discomfiture of the leaders of the great Whig party, that when Parliament re-assembled after Christmas they scarcely ventured even upon a show of resistance. That the young King, whatever other motives he may have had, was for humanity's sake very desirous of peace it would be unjust to him to deny. Rigby has recorded the singular joy which he manifested when the accession of the Duke of Bedford to the peace-party was first announced to him. "I have heard much," he writes to the Duke, "of the Duke of Newcastle's kisses, but never had one from him till to-day, and I thought His Majesty and Lord Bute would have kissed me too, I was so received by them both at St. James's."† To the Duke of Bedford the King himself writes on the 26th of October—"The best despatch I can receive from you, and the most essential to my service, will be these Preliminaries signed. May Providence, in compassion to human misery, give you this

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 233. "George be King!" is said to have been the frequent monition of the Princess to her son; an expression, however, very unlikely to have been ever uttered; and if uttered, still more unlikely to have been repeated by the courtiers.—See *Nichols' Recollections of the Reign of George* 3, vol. vi. pp. 6, 11.

† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 7.

means of executing this great and noble work, and be assured I will never forget the duty and attachment you show to me in this important crisis." *

Yet, signal as was the triumph which Bute had obtained, and high as he stood in the good graces of his Sovereign, he had become both a discontented and an unhappy man. Success instead of diminishing had increased his difficulties. The public had been taught by the Opposition that the Peace was only the first step towards a despotism; and accordingly, instead of the popularity which Bute had promised himself as the reward for his having terminated an expensive and sanguinary war, he found himself the object of almost general abuse and dislike. At the theatres, every offensive word, spoken by the actors, that could be made applicable to him, was immediately caught up, and vociferously responded to by the audience. A line reflecting on Favourites, spoken by Mrs. Pritchard in Cibber's comedy of "The Careless Husband," was received with rounds of applause. † On all sides, the unlucky Minister was assailed by the lampooners, the caricaturists, and pamphleteers, from the caustic prose of Wilkes and the fierce and powerful verse of Churchill, to the low and scurrilous effusions of Grub Street. In one caricature of the time he is delineated as scourging Britannia with thistles; others represent the high-roads to London as crowded with ragged Scotchmen; another, entitled "The Royal Dupe," pictures the young King as being lulled to sleep in his mother's lap, unconscious of the presence of Bute and Fox, the former of whom is engaged in stealing his sceptre and the latter in picking his pocket. ‡ But the form of popular attack which naturally afforded the greatest pain to the Court, was the public and indelicate manner in

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 140.

† *Lady Easy:* "Have a care, Madam! An undeserving Favourite has been the ruin of many a Prince's empire."—"*The Careless Husband,*" *Act* 4, *Scene* 1.

‡ Wright's "England under the House of Hanover," vol. i. pp. 402–3.

which the wits and lampooners continued to associate the name of the First Lord of the Treasury with that of the mother of the Sovereign. On one occasion the mob was bold enough to carry about the streets of London a gallows, from which were suspended—previously to their being committed to the flames—a *jack-boot* and a woman's petticoat; the former being a miserable play upon the Earl's Christian name and title, and the petticoat typical of course of the Princess Dowager. Not less offensive was a paper which appeared in Wilkes's famous periodical the "North Briton," in which, under the names and in the characters of Queen Isabella and "the gentle Mortimer," the writer symbolizes the tender connexion which was presumed to exist between Bute and the royal foundress of his fortunes. But grossest of all was a frontispiece to one of the numbers of "Almon's Political Register," in which Lord Bute is represented as being secretly introduced into the bedchamber of the Princess of Wales; the identity of which is rendered unmistakable by a widow's lozenge, which, with the royal arms delineated upon it, is suspended over the head of the bed.*

These and other libellous attacks—whether they were levelled against the Scots as a nation, or whether against individuals, as in the case of the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute—were, of course, in the highest degree disgraceful, not only to the hireling authors† and limners of the day, but also to the age which encouraged their

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 199.

† As an instance of the utterly unprincipled dealings of some of these Grub Street maligners may be related an anecdote of the well-known and really highly-gifted Gilbert Stuart, whom his countryman, Somerville the historian, mentions meeting in 1769, at the hospitable table of Murray, the publisher, in Fleet Street. "I was astonished," wrote Somerville, "at the effrontery as well as the impudence with which he dared to avow a want of all principle and honour. He showed me two contrasted characters of Alderman Beckford, the idol of the mob, which he was to insert in the antagonist newspapers most in circulation; one a panegyric and the other a libel, for each of which he expected to receive the reward of a guinea."—"*My own Life and Times*," by the Rev. T. Somerville, p. 149.

scurrilities. That one, at least, of the members of the late Cabinet—Lord Temple—warmly aided and abetted the cowardly slanderers, is a fact as certain as it is discreditable.

It should be remembered that, in the opinion of many of the wisest and the best, Bute, by bringing the war to a conclusion, had done the State good service. "The war," said the dying Carteret, "had been the most glorious, and the peace was the most honourable this nation ever saw."* Bute's enemies, however, not only denied him the credit even of good intentions, but continued to raise so fierce an outcry against him, that it had become perilous for him to appear in the streets except in disguise by night, or else protected by pugilists by day. "He went about the streets," writes Lord Chesterfield, "timidly and disgracefully, attended at a small distance by a gang of *bruisers*, the scoundrels and ruffians that attend the Bear Gardens."†—"A gentleman, who died not many years ago," writes Lord Macaulay, "used to say that he once recognised the favourite Earl in the piazza of Covent Garden, muffled in a large coat, and with a hat and wig drawn over his brows."‡ Not since Lord Chancellor Jefferies had been seized in a sailor's dress in Wapping, had a British statesman been reduced to more ignominious straits, or been in greater danger from the fury of the mob. On one occasion, when on his way to the House of Lords in a sedan-chair, it was only by the timely arrival of the Horse Guards that he was rescued from the violence of the populace.

In the mean time, although the Court had been triumphant on one most important occasion, there were still other questions pending, which were fraught with difficulty, if not with danger to theMinister. It was a period of great

* Wood's Essay on Homer, Preface.

† Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. ii. p. 477.

‡ Lord Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 561, tenth edition.

financial embarrassment. The cost of the war had been enormous. The odious task of imposing fresh taxes had become a matter of absolute necessity. Never had the country stood in more need of an able financial Minister, yet seldom had there been a more inefficient Chancellor of the Exchequer than Sir Francis Dashwood, the statesman who was now preparing his Budget for the consideration of Parliament.

Sir Francis was the only son of Sir Francis Dashwood, Baronet, by Lady Mary Fane, daughter of Vere, fourth Earl of Westmoreland. In his political opinions he was a Tory; he had formerly been an uncompromising Jacobite. Although gifted neither with eloquence nor with eminent administrative ability, his blunt and hearty manner of speaking in the House of Commons had obtained for him a reputation for political honesty and strong sense. In his youth he had travelled over many countries, and in private life was an eminently entertaining and agreeable companion. Here, however, our encomiums of him must cease. Lax as were the morals of the age in which he lived, it may be questioned whether he was surpassed by any one of his contemporaries in profaneness, obscenity, and vice. His wild and irreverent frolics were the constant talk of his time. One of them, which occurred at Rome, will suffice to satisfy the curiosity of the reader. Formerly, it seems, on a Good Friday in the Holy City, it was the custom for a devotee, on entering the Sistine Chapel for the purpose of performing self-penance, to receive from the attendant at the door a small whip, with which, at a certain signal, he was required to scourge himself. The chapel was lighted by three candles only, which were extinguished one by one, at brief intervals of time, by the priest. On the blowing out of the first candle, the penitents divested themselves of their upper garments. A second candle was then extinguished, on which a further

disrobement took place; and lastly, on the blowing out of the third candle, which left the chapel in complete darkness, the several penitents commenced flagellating themselves, giving vent at the same time to appropriate groans and lamentations. It was on one of these occasions, that Sir Francis, having provided himself with a formidable riding-whip, which he concealed beneath his upper coat, took the small scourge from the attendant and, advancing to the further end of the chapel, placed himself demurely among the devotees. On the extinction of the third candle he proceeded to put in practice the unjustifiable joke which he had projected. Drawing his riding-whip from beneath his coat, he commenced laying it about him right and left till he reached the chapel door; the penitents all the while believing that the Evil One was among them, and shrieking out "*Il diavolo! Il diavolo!*" In the confusion, Sir Francis contrived to effect his escape. The outrage, however, was subsequently traced to him, and accordingly no choice was left to him but to make the best of his way out of the Papal dominions.*

Sir Francis, it should be related, founded on his return to England the once well-known Dilettanti Club, an eccentric association composed chiefly of young men who had made the tour of Europe, and who had acquired a taste for antiquities and the fine arts. The nominal qualification, according to Walpole, was having been in Italy; the real one was getting drunk.† Each of the members sat for his portrait, which was ornamented with peculiar symbols and devices. That of their founder represented him in the habit of St. Francis, at his devotions before a copy of the statue of Venus de' Medici, from which issued a stream of light, that shed its rays upon the kneeling libertine. ‡

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 172, note by Sir Denis Le Marchant.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. i. p. 240. Ed. 1857.

‡ During many years in the last century this infamous picture—for utterly infamous

Such were the character and habits of the statesman to whose lot it fell, at this critical period, to discharge the intricate and onerous duties of Minister of Finance. Of everything connected with commercial matters he seems to have been as ignorant as Bute himself. According to one of the Wits of the day, he was a "man to whom a sum of five figures was an impenetrable secret." Sir Francis, indeed, laughed at his own incompetency. "People," he said, "will point at me in the streets, and cry, 'There goes the worst Chancellor of the Exchequer that ever appeared!'"* Nevertheless,
1763. he had the hardihood to lay his Budget before the House of Commons, when not only did it prove as signal a failure as the world had anticipated, but many of his expositions were received with shouts of derision. One of his propositions was to lay a tax upon cider, an impost so hateful to the country gentlemen, that, before many days had passed, the cider-counties, hitherto the most loyal in England,† had spirited themselves up almost to a state of insurrection. It was during an exciting discussion on this unpopular item, that George Grenville received a memorable buffet from his brother-in-law, Pitt. It was the late war, said Grenville, or rather it was the profligate extravagance with which it had been carried on, that had occasioned the necessity for

it was—hung openly in the great room of the King's Arms Tavern, in New Palace-yard, where the Dilettanti Club had at one time held their meetings.—*Appendix to the North Briton*, vol. iv. p. 277, edition, 1772.—*Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. i. p. 174.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 250. See also the Bedford Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 222. His predecessor, Lord Barrington, though a much better man, had given, as he himself candidly admits, small promise of turning out a much better Chancellor of the Exchequer. "The same strange fortune," he writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell, on the 23rd of March, 1761, "which made me Secretary at War, five years and a half ago, has made me Chancellor of the Exchequer. It may, perhaps, at last make me Pope. I think I am equally fit to be at the head of the Church as of the Exchequer." —*Ellis's Orig. Letters*, vol. iv. p. 433.

† "Yet was the Cider-land unstained with guilt;
The Cider-land, obsequious still to thrones,
Abhorred such base, disloyal deeds, and all
Her pruning-hooks extended into swords."
Philips' "*Cider*," Book 2.

additional taxation.* "I call upon the honourable gentlemen opposite to me," he repeated in his usual querulous style, "to say *where* they would wish to have a tax laid? I say, sir, let them tell me *where!* I repeat it, sir! I am entitled to say to them,—*tell me where?*" Pitt, to whom any reflection on the conduct of the war was tantamount to an insult offered to himself, instantly and indignantly rose from his seat. Every eye in the House was fixed upon him and presently every member was convulsed with laughter, as, fixing his eye contemptuously on his brother-in-law, and mimicking his languid and monotonous tone of voice, he repeated the words of a popular song by Howard, then familiar to every ear—

"Gentle Shepherd, tell me where!"

This sarcasm Pitt followed up by a terrific volume of invective, which he had no sooner concluded than Grenville in a transport of fury sprang on his feet. "If gentlemen," he commenced, "are to be subjected to such contemptuous treatment"—Pitt, however, was satisfied with his triumph, and accordingly, making a bow to Grenville, accompanied by a glance of the most withering disdain, he again rose from his seat, and walked deliberately out of the House. It was the "most contemptuous look and manner," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "that I ever saw." And again Rigby adds: "So much ingenuity and insolence I never saw or heard before."† From that day, Grenville was never able to shake off the nickname of "The Gentle Shepherd."

Notwithstanding the unpopularity of the Cider Bill, and the strenuous opposition which it met with in both Houses of Parliament, so great was the influence of the Court at this

* "In 1714, the Public Debt was 54,145,363*l.*, bearing an interest of 3,351,358*l.* Upon the close of the war in 1762, it amounted to 146,683,844*l.*, bearing an interest of 4,840,821*l.*"—*Cooke's History of Party*, vol. ii., p. 408, note.

† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 219. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 251.

period that it was carried by large majorities, and in due time became part of the law of the land. Two protests against it were entered on the Journals of the House of Lords; this having been the first instance, it is said, of the Peers having divided on a Money Bill.*

Thus had Bute achieved his second triumph. England, as Walpole observes, was lying "submissively prostrate" before him. "Those," as Dodington had prophesied, "who had been at his throat were now at his feet." †

Yet it was at this very time, when the favourite of fortune was in the full possession, and apparently in the full enjoyment of power, that the world was amazed at the announce-
Apr. 8, ment that he had ceased to be Minister. To his friends, Bute notified that ill health, and the unpopularity which he had been the means of entailing on his Sovereign, were the causes of his retirement. His physicians—he wrote to the Duke of Bedford—had warned him that any constant application to business might prove fatal to him. Some time since, he added, he had received a "solemn promise" from the King that he should be allowed to retire as soon as Peace might be obtained, and his Majesty had now been reluctantly induced to fulfil that promise. "And now, my dear Lord," he continues, "need I make use of many arguments to prevail on the Duke of Bedford to assist his young Sovereign with his weight and name—that sovereign who has not a wish but what terminates in this country's happiness, and who, since he mounted the throne, has shown ever the highest regard and predilection for the Duke of Bedford." ‡ —"Lord Bute," writes Lord Barrington to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "resigned last Friday. He will have no office, and declares he will not be a Minister behind the curtain, but give up business entirely. The reasons he gives for

* "History of the Late Minority," p. 123.

† *Letter to Lord Bute*, dated Oct. 8, 1761; Adolphus's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 466.

‡ Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 223–225.

this step are that he finds the dislike taken to him has lessened the popularity which the King had and ought to have; that he hopes his retirement will make things quiet and his Majesty's Government easy. He says that he unwillingly undertook the business of a Minister, on the King's absolute promise that he might retire when the peace should be made."*

Instead of sharing the astonishment which was felt by Bute's contemporaries at his voluntary retirement from power, there would, we conceive, have been much more reason for surprise had he deemed it prudent to remain. Increasing doubts in his own mind, in regard to his capacity to conduct the affairs of a great nation—vexation at the hatred and contempt with which he was regarded by the middle and lower classes—disgust at the scandalous scurrilities to which he was exposed in common with the second lady in the realm—fear of personal violence at the hands of the rabble†—and lastly, fear of impeachment by Parliament in the event of the Whig Lords recovering their former despotic authority—were, in addition to the reasons assigned by himself, motives quite powerful enough to induce a much bolder and less sensitive man than Bute to desire to quit the helm. Moreover, already the "Great Families" were engaged in re-organising their divided forces. Early in the preceding month, there had taken place at Devonshire House a "great Coalition dinner," at which Pitt and Lord Temple had been ominously present, and at which a joint plan of action against the insolent upstart and Tory interloper, as the Whigs regarded Bute, had been enthusiastically agreed upon. "Their countenances," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "are quite cleared up since they have put them-

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv., p. 461. Second series.

† "The fact must be certain," writes the Duke of Newcastle to Pitt, on the 9th of April, 1763, "that the Minister was thoroughly frightened from the universal resentment of the whole nation which he has drawn upon himself."—*Chatham Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 221.

selves under Pitt's management."* The Coalition is said to have been composed of the Dukes of Devonshire, Bolton, and Portland; the Marquis of Rockingham; the Earls of Albemarle, Ashburnham, Hardwicke, and Besborough; Earls Temple and Cornwallis; Lords Spencer, Sondes, Grantham, and Villiers; Sir George Savile, Pitt, and James Grenville.† Rigby further mentions the Duke of Grafton as having been present at the "great Coalition dinner" at Devonshire House.‡ George Grenville, it will be observed, kept aloof from his former friends.

Another source of vexation to Bute was the timid and lukewarm support which he received from his own colleagues. "Single in a Cabinet of my own forming," he writes to a friend; "no aid in the House of Lords to support me except two Peers; § both the Secretaries of State silent, and the Lord Chief Justice, whom I brought myself into office, ‖ voting for me but speaking against me—the ground I stand upon is so hollow that I am afraid not only of falling myself, but of involving my royal master in my ruin. It is time for me to retire." As far as his personal interests were concerned, the Earl had but few inducements to tempt him to remain in power. His vanity had been gratified by his having filled the highest office to which the most ambitious subject can aspire. He had secured the Order of the Garter for himself, and an English peerage for his son. He had succeeded in accomplishing the two great objects of his political existence, the bringing the war to a close, and the overthrow of the Whig oligarchy. By the death of his father-in-law, Mr. Edward Wortley Montagu,¶ he had become the possessor of a

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 219.

† "History of the Late Minority," p. 91.

‡ Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 219.

§ The Earls of Denbigh and Pomfret. ‖ Lord Mansfield.

¶ Lord Bute had married, in 1736, Mary, daughter of Mr., and the celebrated Lady Wortley Montagu. Horace Walpole writes to George Montagu, on the 7th of

noble fortune, and consequently the emoluments of office had ceased to be any longer of importance to the princely proprietor of Cardiff Castle and Luton. Lastly, he had the good fortune to be blessed with those redeeming tastes and accomplishments, which alike afford occupation to, and throw a grace over, retirement. "I never knew a man," writes his frequent guest M. Dutens, "with whom one could be so long *tête-à-tête* without being tired, as Lord Bute. His knowledge was so extensive, and consequently his conversation so varied, that one thought oneself in the company of several persons, with the advantage of being sure of an even temper in a man whose goodness, politeness, and attention, were never wanting towards those who lived with him."*

Bute, writes Lord Chesterfield, "had honour, honesty, and good intentions. He was too proud to be respectable or respected; too cold and silent to be amiable; too cunning to have great abilities."† Bishop Warburton also says of him in one of his letters:—"Lord Bute is a very unfit man to be Prime Minister of England. First, he is a Scotchman; secondly, he is the King's friend; and thirdly, he is an honest man."‡ "The great cry against Lord Bute," writes Lord Chesterfield, "was on account of his being a Scotchman; the only fault which he could not possibly correct."§

That Lord Bute was cold and proud by nature—that he

February, 1761:—"Have you heard what immense riches old Wortley has left? One million, three hundred and fifty thousand pounds! It is all to centre in my Lady Bute: her husband is one of fortune's prodigies."—*Walpole's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 377. Gray also writes about the same period:—"You see old Wortley Montagu is dead at last, at eighty-three. He has left better than half a million of money."—*Gray's Works*, vol. iii. p. 272. According to Lord Chesterfield, Lady Bute, by the death of her father and mother came into possession of "five or six hundred thousand pounds."—*Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope*, vol. ii. p. 470.

* "Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement," vol. iv. pp. 177—8.

† Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. ii. p. 482.

‡ Seaward's Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons, vol. ii. p. 369.

§ Letters, vol. ii. p. 473.

was a narrow-minded politician, and an inefficient Minister, —may be asserted without much fear of contradiction. But, on the other hand, that he was the harsh, austere, inaccessible domestic tyrant, such as his political opponents have represented him to be,* may, we think, be with equal safety denied. Lady Hervey, whose praise is of value, writes on the 15th December, 1760:—"So much I know of him, though not personally acquainted with him, that he has always been a good husband, an excellent father, a man of truth and sentiments above the common run of men. They say he is proud. I know not. Perhaps he is. But it is like the pride they also accuse Mr. Pitt of, which will always keep them from little, false, mean, frivolous ways; and such pride may all that I love, or interest myself for, ever have!"† That his heart was susceptible of the kindest natural feelings, more than one anecdote might be adduced to prove. On the 27th of May, 1756, Mr. G. Elliott writes to George Grenville:—"I passed all yesterday with Lord Bute, whom I found deeply affected with the death of Bothwell, his old tutor, to whom, more from habitude than on any other account, he was much attached."‡ To the poor and the deserving the purse of Lord Bute was ever open. "He employed me often," writes M. Dutens, "to assist industrious artists who might be saved from ruin by a little sum given in the moment of want; and I have been many times employed by him to visit the prisons, in order to release insolvent debtors whom he did not personally know, and who never knew their benefactor."§

There was one public measure of which Bute is said to have been the suggester—namely the securing the uprightness and independence of the Judges by obtaining

* See Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his Own Time, vol. ii. p. 64, 3rd edition.

† Lady Hervey's Letters, p. 275.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 162.

§ "Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement," vol. iv. p. 185.

an Act of Parliament continuing to them their commissions notwithstanding the demise of the Crown—for which much credit has been awarded him.* Far greater credit is his due on account of the conscientious manner in which he dispensed the patronage of the Church. To George Grenville he writes on the 9th of January, 1762,—"There is no part of my situation, arising from the King's partiality to me, that I prize more than ecclesiastical patronage; not for the sake of making friends or forming party, but from conviction that a proper choice of the Clergy, especially of those in the higher preferments, is rendering to my King and country a most essential service."†

According to Lord Waldegrave, Lord Bute, though possessing but a trifling stock of learning, was anxious to be thought "a polite scholar and a man of great erudition."‡ "The Earl," writes Walpole, "had so little knowledge and so little taste, that his own letters grew a proverb for want of orthography."§ These statements, however, would seem to be greatly exaggerated. When M. Dutens visited him at Luton in 1773, he found the Earl's library consisting of thirty thousand volumes. His cabinet of mathematical instruments and astronomical and philosophical apparatus was considered one of the most complete in Europe;‖ he certainly possessed a taste for architecture and painting; he was the collector of that noble gallery of pictures which is now in the possession of his representative;¶ and, lastly,

* Lord Hardwicke, in a speech in the House of Lords, eulogises this measure "as truly worthy the most renowned legislators of antiquity." On the other hand one of his successors in the Chancellorship, Lord Campbell, pooh-poohs it as a trumpery act of legislation,—in fact as no boon at all.—*Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. v., p. 150, *2nd edition*. "We owe," writes Hallam, "this important provision to the Act of Settlement; not, as ignorance and adulation have perpetually asserted, to his late Majesty, George 3."—*Constitutional History of England*, vol. ii. p. 357, 5th edition.

† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 419.

‡ Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 38.

§ Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 18.

‖ "Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement," vol. ii. p. 114.

¶ Charles Fox was of opinion that Lord Bute was a "still more magnificent

it seems to have been owing to the taste for floriculture which he early instilled into the mind of his royal master, that the public are now indebted for the unrivalled national botanical gardens at Kew. Neither should the debt of gratitude, which Kew owes to Queen Charlotte, be forgotten. According to Sir James E. Smith, President of the Linnæan Society, "few persons cherished the study of nature more ardently, or cultivated it so deeply." *

Even Walpole admits that Bute extended his patronage to artists and men of letters. True, indeed, it is, that the persons whom he patronised were chiefly his own countrymen—as, for instance, Mallet, Smollett, Murphy, Macpherson, the professed translator of Ossian, and Home, the author of Douglas—but still, exceptionable as the selection may have been, it was creditable to him as a Minister to have succoured genius at all.

> "The mighty Home, bemired in prose so long,
> Again shall stalk upon the stilts of song:
> While bold Mac-Ossian, wont in ghosts to deal,
> Bids candid Smollett from his coffin steal;
> Bids Mallet quit his sweet Elysian nest,
> Sunk on his St. John's philosophic breast,
> And, like old Orpheus, make some strong effort
> To come from Hell, and warble truth at Court."†

Frederick Prince of Wales, for some time previously to his death, would seem to have set less and less value on the friendship and judgment of Bute. The Princess of Wales, on the contrary, retained her friendship—or, as some would have it, her love for him—to the last. "The Princess Dowager," writes Lord Waldegrave, "discovered other accomplishments, of which the Prince, her husband, may

man," as regarded a taste for, and as a collector of, "pictures or fine things," than another noble virtuoso of the time, Lord Lansdowne.—*Recollections by Samuel Rogers*, p. 34.

* "Kew Gardens," by Sir W. J. Hooker, p. 9. Lord Bute printed, at his own expense, a splendid work on Botany, in nine volumes quarto. Only twelve copies were printed, one of which is in the Royal Library. In 1813, a copy was sold for 82*l.* 19*s.*—See *Lowndes' Bibliographers' Manual*, art. Bute.

† Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers.

not, perhaps, have been the most competent to judge."* The visits of Lord Bute to Carlton House are said to have been usually made of an evening and with great secrecy; the Earl, on such occasions, borrowing the sedan-chair of one of the ladies of the Princess's household, Miss Vansittart, and drawing the curtains close, in order to avoid detection.† "The eagerness," writes Walpole, "of the pages of the back-stairs to let the Princess know whenever Lord Bute arrived, and some other symptoms, contributed to dispel the ideas that had been conceived of the rigour of her widowhood." And again Walpole writes:—"I am as much convinced of an amorous connexion between Bute and the Princess Dowager as if I had seen them together." Yet, after all, these bold opinions are founded on no tangible facts. "It is certain, on the one hand," writes Lord Chesterfield, "that there were many very strong indications of the tenderest connexion between them; but, on the other hand, when one considers how deceitful appearances often are in those affairs, the capriciousness and inconsistency of women, which make them often be unjustly suspected, and the improbability of knowing exactly what passes in *tête-à-têtes*, one is reduced to mere conjectures."‡ Since so shrewd and well-informed a man of the world as

* Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs, p. 39.

† Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs of his Own Time, vol. ii. p. 73. That suspicions of the existence of a tender connexion between the Princess and Lord Bute, were current even in the life-time of her husband is shown by the well-known retort addressed to her by her maid of honour, Miss Chudleigh, when—on the occasion of the latter appearing in a half-nude state as Iphigenia at a masked ball at Somerset House—the Princess pointedly rebuked her immodesty by throwing a veil over her person—"*Votre Altesse Royale sait que chacune a son But.*"—*Wraxall's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 74. The ball in question took place on the first of May, 1749. "Miss Chudleigh's dress, or rather undress," writes Mrs. Montagu to her sister, "was remarkable. She was Iphigenia for the sacrifice, but so naked the high priest might easily inspect the entrails of the victim. The maids of honour, not of maids the strictest, were so offended they would not speak to her." Walpole also writes—"Miss Chudleigh was Iphigenia, but so naked that you would have taken her for Andromeda."—*Mrs. Montagu's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 158. *Walpole's Letters*, vol. ii. p. 153.

‡ Lord Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. ii. p. 471.

Lord Chesterfield was unable to solve the mystery, it would surely be presumption on our part to pronounce any opinion on this difficult as well as delicate question. Whether, however, Lord Bute's connexion with the Princess was of a tender nature or not, it was certainly blended with a friendship, which death only was able to terminate. If, for instance, the reader of these pages should chance to visit Luton in Bedfordshire, his attention will, in the park, be attracted to a plain Tuscan pillar surmounted by an urn, which, according to tradition, was raised by Lord Bute in honour of his royal mistress, but which in fact was erected in the days of the former possessors of Luton, the Napiers, to the memory of some lamented scion of their house. But, if the visitor will raise his glance to some height up the pillar, he will be able to detect a touching inscription, bearing date the year in which the Princess died—a silent yet eloquent memorial of the grateful attachment of a fallen Minister to the royal lady whose friendship had so often consoled him in the hours of difficulty and danger, and when his name had become a by-word of reproach and contempt.

DUM MEMOR IPSE MEI

DUM

SPIRITUS HOS REGIT ARTUS.

A —o— N

1772.*

Lord Bute's resignation took place on the 8th of April 1763; that of Fox immediately followed. The latter claimed the peerage which had been guaranteed to him as the reward of his political apostacy, and accordingly on the 16th he was advanced to the dignity of Baron Holland. About the same time, Sir Francis Dashwood was

* From *private information.*

"Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus."

Æneid, Lib. 4, v. 337.

raised to the Peerage as Baron Le Despencer, a title which had been for some years in abeyance in his family.* Apr. 19.

Notwithstanding the general conviction which existed—and, indeed, which still exists—to the contrary, there is reason to believe, not only that Bute's influence over his Sovereign had been for some time on the wane, but that, so soon as the Earl had succeeded in securing a Parliamentary majority in favour of the Peace, the King with no great reluctance accepted his resignation. "I believe," writes Walpole, "that, even before his accession, the King was weary both of his mother and of her favourite, and wanted to, and did early shake off, much of that influence."† Bute—as the Duchess of Brunswick, George the Third's eldest sister, afterwards assured Lord Malmesbury—had flattered himself that the King would have entreated him to remain in office; but, added the Duchess, the King accepted the Seals from him in silence.‡ A like presumption may be gathered from a remarkable conversation which, forty years after Bute's resignation, the King held with George Rose at Cuffnells. Bute, he said, was unhappily deficient in political firmness; a most essential quality in a First Minister of the Crown. "This," writes Rose, "led his Majesty to remind me of the anecdote related by him, in 1801, of his Lordship while Minister—when surrounded in his carriage by a mob near the House of Lords—coming to him in a panic, followed by the mob to St. James's, to dissuade his Majesty from going to the Play, and of the rebuke he gave his Lordship for that proceeding. He said, however, that his Lordship did not want talents, and that Lord Mansfield had assured him he never knew any one, who came so late into business, take to it and do it so well." §

* Lord Le Despencer died December 9, 1789, when the Barony devolved upon his kinsman Sir Thomas Stapleton, Bart.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 133, note.

‡ Lord Malmesbury's Diaries, vol. iii. p. 158.

§ Rose's Diaries, vol. ii. p. 192. See also Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 255.

CHAPTER X.

George Grenville appointed Premier—Grenville in the House of Commons—John Wilkes, and Liberty of the Press—The New Order of "Franciscans"—The "North Briton" Newspaper—"General Warrants"—Wilkes committed to the Tower, but released on writ of Habeas Corpus—Popular excitement in London—The King's dissatisfaction with the Grenville Ministry.

It was at the recommendation of Lord Bute—as has been generally supposed—that the King sent for George Grenville, and conferred upon him the honour which he most coveted—the Premiership.* In offering this advice to his Sovereign, it was Bute's intention, according to his enemies, to make use of Grenville as a mere political puppet; he himself continuing to enjoy the solid advantages of power, exempt from its perils and responsibilities, while he left to his delegate the empty title of Premier. If such were the case, and if Bute really looked upon Grenville as the mere complaisant and tractable being which this supposition implies, he was destined to be signally disappointed. Not that, in thus forming a low estimate of Grenville's character and abilities, Bute was singular in his error. Probably there was not one of Grenville's own colleagues—possibly not one even of his

* George Grenville, second son of Richard Grenville, Esq. of Wotton, by his marriage with Hester Countess Temple, was born October 14th, 1712. He was educated at Eton and afterwards at Christ Church, Oxford. Mr. Grenville represented the town of Buckingham in Parliament continuously from 1741 till his death on the 13th of November 1770. He married, in 1749, Elizabeth sister to Charles Earl of Egremont and daughter of Sir William Wyndham, by whom he became the father of George Grenville, first Marquis of Buckingham, of William, created Baron Grenville, and of the late Right Hon. Thomas Grenville.

own nearest relations—who had discovered how deep-rooted and all-absorbing was the ambition which lurked beneath the cold nature and uninviting aspect of this remarkable man.* "He had hitherto," writes Walpole, "been known but as a fatiguing orator and indefatigable drudge, more likely to disgust than to offend."† Even after he had risen to be First Minister of the Crown, the House of Commons seems to have treated him with no great respect. "I wish," said Sir Fletcher Norton one day to him in the House, "that the Right Honourable gentleman, instead of shaking his head, would shake an argument out of it."‡ Even those, who were capable of appreciating the ability of his financial and commercial expositions, seem to have regarded him in a not much higher light than as a painstaking bore.‡

George Grenville usually figures as one of the most short-sighted and inefficient Premiers of modern times. Nevertheless he possessed many of the qualifications requisite to fill high office with credit. His abilities were much above mediocrity; his personal courage was unquestionable, and the interests of his country were ever near to his heart. His private and political integrity were equally unimpeachable. As a man of business, he was punctual

* The Duke of Newcastle, however, was wise enough to see through Bute's design, if such existed, as well as to discover Grenville's real character. On the day after Bute's resignation we find his Grace writing to Mr. Pitt;—"I suppose he [Bute] hopes to retain the same power and influence out of employment that he had in it; but he may find that difficult. I question whether he has chosen the best person to act under him for that purpose." *Chatham Corresp.*, v, ii. 222. Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, on the contrary, seems to have anticipated that Bute would retain to the full his former influence. To Lord Royston he writes on the 4th September 1763;—"I have been very credibly informed that both Lord Halifax and George Grenville have declared that he [Bute] is to go beyond sea, and reside for a twelvemonth or more. You know Cardinal Mazarine was twice exiled out of France, and governed France as absolutely whilst he was absent as when he was present." *Harris's Life of Hardwicke*, vol. iii. 381.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 271.

‡ Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 358, note. "Sir Fletcher," writes Lord Temple to Lady Chatham, "was brutal and impertinent to George Grenville last night."

and indefatigable. Having been called to the Bar, he had the advantage of carrying with him into public life a competent knowledge of law. In his youth, instead of having associated with the hazard-players at White's, the Macaronis at the Cocoa Tree, or the jockies at Newmarket, the future Premier had lived laborious days in gloomy chambers in one of the Inns of Court. Since then he had served a long and diligent apprenticeship in various offices of the State. From having been a junior Lord of the Admiralty, in 1744, and of the Treasury in 1747, he had risen to be Treasurer of the Navy in 1754, Secretary of State in 1762, and, the same year, to be First Lord of the Admiralty. While employed in these several Departments he is said to have made himself completely master of the business and duties of each. Lastly, a well-deserved reputation for religion and strict morality raised him high in the estimation of an influential party in the State. "Mr. Grenville," writes Bishop Newton, "was not only an able Minister, but was likewise a religious good man, and regularly attended the Service of the Church every Sunday morning, even when he was in the highest offices." *

On the other hand, Grenville was afflicted with infirmities of mind and temper which were certain to mar his success as First Minister of the Crown. He was a fatiguing talker and a bad listener. In his intercourse with others there was no amenity; no openness, no geniality, no tact. His nature was suspicious and unforgiving; his manners cold and ungracious, his countenance unprepossessing. He was distinguished by a self-conceit and a self-confidence which were proof against the most persuasive arguments and the most incontrovertible facts.† To persuade him

* Bishop Newton's Autobiography, Works, vol. i. pp. 115—6.

† Yet it was more than whispered at the time that his political conduct was too much influenced by his wife, a strong-minded, and most probably ambitious woman See the *Bedford Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 324, note by Earl Russell.

that on any occasion he had been in the wrong in his public capacity, is said to have been next to an impossibility.

As a statesman there was no grandeur in Grenville's policy. Though at times he was a powerful speaker, there was nothing ennobling in his eloquence, nothing enlightened in his conceptions, and no expansion in his views. When called upon to direct the helm of Government, he carried with him to the service of the State qualifications which would have been invaluable in a manager of a great mercantile establishment, but which were often rendered worse than barren when brought to bear on the interests of a great empire. Economy, in his opinion, was the first of virtues. It was a virtue, however, which, laudably as he may have cultivated it in the management of his domestic concerns, was often turned to a very ill account by this short-sighted Minister, when applied to the affairs of the public. For instance, there occurred an opportunity during his Administration, when the expenditure of a few hundred pounds would have cleared the suburbs and thoroughfares of the metropolis of the cut-purses and footpads by which they were then infested, yet he refused to sign the Treasury Minute which would have remedied the crying evil. Again, when the King and Queen remonstrated that their domestic privacy at Buckingham House was about to be disturbed by the erection of the houses which now form a part of Grosvenor Place, Grenville refused to purchase—although for the comparatively trifling sum of £20,000—a tract of ground which would have added another healthy area to the metropolis, and of which the pecuniary value is now incalculable.* On the more famous and ruinous consequences of his pettifogging endeavour to wring a paltry tax from the Americans, it would at present be premature to dwell. Grenville's

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 160.

proper element was in the House of Commons. He was a firm believer in its infallibility as a national senate. He was ready enough to accept the axiom that all power is derived from the people, yet the people having once delegated that power to their representatives, he held that the community had ceased to have any voice or concern in the administration of affairs.* It was in the House of Commons that his financial knowledge, and thorough acquaintance with the business of the State, gave him a pre-eminent advantage over his contemporaries. Of the duties, the precedents, and Constitution of that Assembly he was intimately cognisant. Even after the longest and most fatiguing debate it seems to have been no effort to him to sit down and write a long account of it to the King. As Burke said of him—"He took public business, not as a duty he was to fulfil, but as a pleasure he was to enjoy." † He seemed in fact to have no delight out of the House of Commons. Once, when he was taken ill and fainted in the House, George Selwyn, amidst loud cries from the Members for ammonia and cold water, was overheard exclaiming—"Why don't you give him the Journals to smell to!" ‡

Grenville, following a precedent furnished him by Sir Robert Walpole and afterwards by Mr. Pelham, combined in his own person the two offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. His principal supporters in the Government were the Earls of Egremont and Halifax. His two most formidable opponents were his brother Earl Temple, and his brother-in-law Mr. Pitt, both of them recently his colleagues in office, and both of them formerly among the most trusted of his friends.

* "In his discourse," writes Walpole, "I thought him a grounded Republican." *Reign of George* 3, vol. i. p. 339.

† Speech on American Taxation, April 19, 1774. Burke's Speeches, vol. i. p. 205.

‡ Earl Russell's Life of Moore, vol. ii. p. 213; narrated by the late Lord Lansdowne.

Grenville had scarcely been a month at the head of the Treasury, before his near-sighted views and intolerant temperament induced him to commit his famous and fatal blunder of declaring war against the celebrated Wilkes and the Press. John Wilkes, whose name figures so prominently in the social and political history of these times, was the son of a wealthy distiller in Clerkenwell, from whom he had inherited a considerable property in Buckinghamshire.* He was at this period Member for Aylesbury, and Lieutenant-Colonel of the Buckinghamshire Militia. Long previously to his having achieved a reputation as a political writer, he had made himself conspicuous, in the gay world, by the charm of his conversation, by the fastidious luxuriousness of his repasts, by his lively and ready wit, and by his wild frolics and Bacchanalian debaucheries. He was a scholar. He was endowed with the easy address and engaging manners of an accomplished man of fashion; his presence of mind and self-possession had never been known to fail him; his personal intrepidity had been proved on many trying, though not always on very creditable occasions. "He was a delightful and instructive companion," writes his friend, Butler, the Reminiscent, "but too often offensive in his freedom of speech when religion or the sex was mentioned. In his manner and habits he was an elegant Epicurean, yet it was evident to all his intimates that he feared—

'Manes aliquos et subterranea regna.'"

So ready was his wit that, according to the same authority, wagers were laid that from the time of his leaving his house in Great George Street, till he reached Guildhall, there would not be a person, whom he might meet and converse with, but would leave him either with a smile or a

* Wilkes was born, at his father's house in St. John Street, Clerkenwell, on the 17th of October 1727, and consequently, at the time of his famous collision with the Grenville Ministry, he was in his thirty-sixth year.

hearty laugh.* Gibbon, the historian, who passed in his society the evening of the 23rd of September 1762, has done full justice to the fascination of his conversational powers. "I scarcely," he writes, "ever met with a better companion. He has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge. *He told us himself, that in this time of public dissension he was resolved to make his fortune.*"—"This," adds Gibbon, "proved a very debauched day. We drank a good deal, both after dinner and supper, and when at last Wilkes had retired, Sir Thomas [Worsley] and some others, of which I was *not* one, broke into his room and made him drink a bottle of claret in bed."†—"In private society, particularly at table," writes his acquaintance, Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "Wilkes was pre-eminently agreeable; abounding in anecdote; ever gay and convivial; converting his very defects of person, manner, or enunciation, to purposes of merriment or entertainment. If any man ever was pleasing who squinted, who had lost his teeth and lisped, Wilkes might be so esteemed."‡ Wilkes's squint, which has been immortalized by Hogarth, was once conspicuous on a tithe of the tavern sign-boards in England. One day, as he himself used to relate, his attention was attracted towards an old lady who was intently looking up at one of these evidences of his popularity. "Ah!" at last he heard her murmur to herself, "he hangs everywhere but where he ought to hang."

But, whatever agreeable or redeeming qualities Wilkes may have possessed, they were completely thrown into the shade by the unblushing licentiousness of his private life. His profligacy shocked even the profligate. He was one of that debauched fraternity, consisting of men of wit and fashion, who, having restored and fitted up the ruins of

* Butler's Reminiscences, pp. 73, 75.

† Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 64. Edition, 1837.

‡ Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 297, 3rd Edition.

Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow, adopted the monastic garb at their convivial meetings, and instituted the most immodest rites and ribald mysteries within its sacred walls. The ruins of the old Abbey, formerly a convent of Cistertian Monks, still stand, surrounded by rich meadows, by hanging woods, and venerable elms, in a beautiful and secluded spot on the banks of the Thames. Over the principal entrance was the inscription, borrowed from Rabelais' Abbey of Theleme, FAY CE QUE VOUDRAS. In the pleasure-grounds, the temples, statues, and inscriptions, all savoured of the impure tastes and irreverent wit of the modern denizens of the Abbey. The members of the new order styled themselves Franciscans in honour of their Father Abbot, Sir Francis Dashwood.

> "Dashwood shall pour from a Communion cup
> Libations to the Goddess without eyes,
> And hob and nob in cider and excise."*

Each monk had his cell and appropriate name. In the chapel—the embellishments of which were of so immodest a character that none but the initiated were permitted access to it—the monks not only adapted the sacred rites of the Roman Catholic Church to the profane worship of Bacchus and Venus, but are said to have carried their blasphemy to such a pitch as to administer the Eucharist to an ape.† The members of the Medmenham Club, whose names have been handed down to us were—besides Sir Francis Dashwood and Wilkes—Bubb Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, Sir Thomas Stapleton, father of the twenty-second Lord Le Despencer, Paul Whitehead the poet, who was secretary to the brotherhood, and Thomas Potter, son of the then late Archbishop of Canterbury, one whose rare and promising abilities as an orator and man of letters unhappily succumbed to habits of debauchery and an early grave.

* Churchill. "The Candidate."

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. pp. 435-6. Ed. 1858.

Laurence Sterne has been named as one of the fraternity,* but apparently on no very sufficient grounds. Lord Sandwich's connexion with the Club is more than once referred to in a clever poem of the time entitled "Ode to the Earl of Sandwich;"—

> "The midnight orgies you reveal,
> Nor Dashwood's *cloistered rites* conceal" &c.

And again,—

> "In vain you tempt Jack Wilkes to dine,
> By copious draughts of *chalic'd wine*,
> And *anthems* to Moll's Rose" &c.†

Such was the society of which the celebrated Wilkes was the idol. Such was the man who, instead of being held up to scorn and detestation by his contemporaries, was not only worshipped by the populace, but courted by the grave and the great. The sober-minded—fascinated by his wit and conversational powers—found excuses for his licentiousness; while women overlooked his exceeding ugliness in the charm of his gallantry, his wit, and his good humour.

The particulars of Wilkes's married career furnish another scandalous page to the curious story of his life. Brought up in the persuasion of the Dissenters, he had married, at the age of twenty-two, an amiable woman professing the same persuasion. As the lady was many years older than himself, the presumption seems to be that he married her solely for the sake of her fortune which was a considerable

* Quarterly Review, vol. cvi. p. 223.

† "New Foundling Hospital of Wit," vol. ii. pp. 97, 100; vol. iii. p. 184. See also, with reference to the Medmenham Abbey Club, the appendix to the *North Briton*, vol. iv. pp. 271—280. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 174. Lord Stanhope's History of England, vol. v. pp. 26—7; edition 1851. Churchill's poem, "The Candidate." Notes to "Chrysal or Adventures of a Guinea," in Ballantyne's Collection of Novels, edited by Sir Walter Scott. *Notes and Queries*, vol. iv. p. 42, and vol. viii. p. 851; and Sheaham's History of Buckinghamshire, pp. 905 and 906, note, in which work Charles Churchill, the poet, Robert Lloyd, the poet, Sir John Dashwood King, Bart., Henry Lovebond Collins, Sir William Stanhope, Sir Benjamin Bates, and Francis Duffield, the proprietor of the Abbey, are also named as reputed members of the fraternity.

one. At all events, before many years had passed away, his dissipated habits, and the dissolute society which he introduced into his house, compelled her to seek a separation from him. By this time all that remained to her, of her former ample means, was an inconsiderable annuity; and even of this pittance he is said to have endeavoured to deprive her by an appeal to the Courts of Law.

Baffled in this attempt, and possessing no longer the means of supporting his expensive tastes for women and the table, Wilkes now thought of betaking himself to the thriving trade of patriotism, which has been so often, as Dr. Johnson wittily defines it, the "last refuge of a scoundrel." His success, which it is needless to say was complete, was rendered the more remarkable owing to the mediocrity of his oratorical powers. His elocution was cold, insipid, and occasionally flippant. His rhetoric was usually composed of declamations on behalf of Liberties and Rights for which he cared but little, and against corruptions, in the fruits of which he would willingly have participated. According to Walpole, who was his contemporary in the House of Commons, so deficient was he in "quickness or talent for public speaking," that he was scarcely listened to with patience.* Once, when the House seemed resolved not to hear him, and a friend urged him to desist—"Speak," he said, "I must!—for my speech has been in print for the newspapers this half-hour." Fortunately for him, he was gifted with a coolness and effrontery which were only equalled by his intrepidity; all three of which qualities constantly served his turn in the hour of need. As an instance of his audacity, it may be mentioned that on one occasion he and one other person put forth, from a private room in a tavern, a Proclamation commencing—"We, the People of England" &c., and concluding—"By order of the Meeting!" Another

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 145.

amusing instance of his effrontery occurred on the hustings at Brentford, when he and Colonel Luttrell were standing there together as rival candidates for the representation of the County of Middlesex in Parliament. Looking down with great apparent apathy on the sea of human beings, consisting chiefly of his own votaries and friends, which stretched beneath him—"I wonder," he whispered to his opponent, "whether among that crowd the fools or the knaves predominate?"—"I will tell them what you say," replied the astonished Luttrell, "and thus put an end to you." Perceiving that Wilkes treated the threat with the most perfect indifference—"Surely," he added, "you don't mean to say you could stand here one hour after I did so?" —"Why not?" replied Wilkes;—"It is *you* who would not be alive one instant after."—"How so?" inquired Luttrell. "Because," said Wilkes, "I should merely affirm that it was a fabrication, and they would destroy you in the twinkling of an eye."*

As a political writer, Wilkes achieved a much greater success than as a Parliamentary speaker. Not long after the accession of George the Third appeared the first number of his famous periodical, the North Briton. Its easy and impudent style of composition, the caustic humour which it displayed, and the racy attacks which it contained upon Lord Bute and the Scotch, very speedily rendered the new Gazette popular, and its author celebrated. "The highest names," writes Walpole, "whether of statesmen or magistrates, were printed at length, and the insinuations went still higher."† The merits of Wilkes as an author this is not the place to discuss. When Walpole, however, speaks of his writings as being merely suited to "the mob and the moment,"‡ he certainly does injustice to the

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 429. Ed. 1858.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 179.
‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 145.

real humour, and the pleasant style and satire, to which Wilkes's writings may unquestionably lay claim. The cleverest of his literary productions are generally admitted to have been his Dedication to Lord Bute of "Roger Mortimer, a Tragedy"; his notes upon Bishop Warburton, and his ironical criticism upon the Speaker's reprimand to the Printers. Wilkes himself greatly preferred the first. In the opinion of Lord Brougham, the last is by far the best.*

The wit and acrimony, with which Wilkes had lately assailed Lord Bute, he now hurled against Grenville. The new Minister had only been a fortnight in Office, when the 45th number of the North Briton made its memorable appearance. It contained, indeed, some severe comments on the Speech from the Throne, and even charged the Ministers with placing a falsehood in the mouth of their Sovereign; and yet, compared with the audacious contents of some of its predecessors, this particular paper was a comparatively harmless one. Under all the circumstances of the case, Grenville should either have followed the example set him by Bute, and treated the patriot with real or assumed contempt, or else he might have secured his silence and his services by conferring on him a lucrative appointment. That Wilkes had his price, is now sufficiently well known. Not only, during the time that Mr. Pitt was in office, had he twice made application for employment under the Government, —once for a seat at the Board of Trade and on another occasion for the Ambassadorship at Constantinople—but he had recently caused it to be intimated to Lord Bute that he had only to appoint him to the Government of Canada, in order to render him for the future a devoted servant of the Crown. But it was not in Grenville's nature to resort to gentle measures when there were arbitrary ones at

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 430. Ed. 1858.

hand, and accordingly he resolved on setting the whole power of the law at work against Wilkes, even at the double risk of involving himself in a profitless and hazardous war with the Press, and of converting a pseudo-patriot into a political martyr.

But, if the prosecution of Wilkes was an impolitic act, still more indefensible were the means by which it was carried into effect. We allude of course, more especially, to the famous arrest of Wilkes, and of the persons associated with him in the publication of the North Briton by a *General Warrant*—that is to say by a warrant which empowered those entrusted with its execution to seize, not only any person or number of persons, but also their respective papers, without any specification of the names of the accused, or of the crimes with which they were charged. This most arbitrary process, although not unprecedented, was unquestionably illegal;* and, except in seasons of imminent national peril—such as had induced the Government to issue them on two occasions during the Rebellion of 1745—was utterly indefensible. "To enter," argued the great Lord Camden, "a man's house by virtue of a nameless warrant, in order to procure evidence, is worse than the Spanish Inquisition; a law under which no Englishman would wish to live an hour. It is a daring public attack upon the liberty of the subject, and in violation of the 29th Chapter of Magna Charta, which is directly pointed against that arbitrary power." Again the illustrious lawyer observed;—"If the other Judges and the highest tribunal in this Kingdom, the House of Lords, shall prove my opinions erroneous, I submit, as will become me, and kiss the rod; but I must say that I shall always consider it as a rod of iron for the chastisement of the people of Great Britain."

* See Stephen's Commentaries on the Laws of England, vol. iv. p. 385 and note.

It was by virtue of this infamous warrant that, on the night of the 29th April, Wilkes's house in Great George Street Westminster was suddenly entered by three messengers from the Secretary of State's Office, and his papers seized. At the same time, no fewer than forty-nine other persons were taken into custody. Wilkes himself was arrested on the following morning in the streets, and carried, in the first instance, to his own residence. Here, among other friends, he was promptly visited by his intimate associate in licentiousness and wit, Charles Churchill the poet, who, as Wilkes had been apprised, was among the persons proscribed. Happily the quick intelligence of Wilkes enabled him to perceive that Churchill's person was unknown to the messengers, and accordingly, by addressing him as *Mr. Thomson*, he contrived to save him from a prison.*

From Great George Street Wilkes was conducted into the formidable presence of the Earls of Halifax and Egremont, the former of whom had signed the order for his arrest. The latter, a well-bred but proud and obstinate peer, is said to have had his dignity much discomposed by the effrontery with which Wilkes demeaned himself towards him personally, as well as by the easy indifference with which he treated the whole proceeding, even though the result was his committal to the Tower. "Your Lordship," he plainly told the Earl, "is very ready to issue orders which you have neither the courage to sign, nor, I believe, to justify."† Subsequently Wilkes challenged Egremont to single combat; but before the day was fixed for their meeting the haughty Earl had ceased to exist. To Lord Temple Wilkes writes on the 19th of August;—"The account I had to settle with Lord Egremont is at length in another way put an end to;

* Letter from Wilkes to the Duke of Grafton, Dec. 12, 1767; Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iii. p. 199.

† Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iii. p. 207.

and, as a Frenchman would say,—"*Il m'a joué un vilain tour.*"*

Both during Wilkes's imprisonment, and while he was under examination before the Secretaries of State, his conduct was far more likely to exasperate than to conciliate the Government. His wit flashed as sportively as ever. He should prefer, he said, occupying the same apartment in the Tower in which Lord Egremont's father, Sir William Wyndham, had been confined when committed for high treason. The only favour he intended to ask was not to be consigned to quarters in which a Scotchman had been lodged, lest he might become infected by the national disorder of the North.† To his young daughter, then in a Convent in France, he sent a letter open through Lord Halifax's office, in which he congratulated her on living in a *free* country.‡

During the first day or two of Wilkes's imprisonment he was treated with great rigour. Not only his friends, but even his counsel, were refused admittance to him. These restrictions, however, having been at length relaxed, he was visited in the Tower by the Duke of Grafton, Lord Temple, and other influential men in opposition; an honour which greatly enhanced his importance in the eyes of the public. At length, having succeeded in obtaining a writ of
May 6. Habeas Corpus, he was brought before Lord Chief Justice Pratt, afterwards Lord Chancellor Camden, who, without entering into the primary question of the legality of General Warrants, pronounced it to be the unanimous opinion of himself and his brother Judges, that inasmuch as Wilkes was a member of the House of Commons he was exempt from arrest for libel, and was consequently entitled to be released from confinement.

* Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 99. Walpole's Memoirs of George 3, vol. i. pp. 282, 283.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 277. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 278.

In the mean time London had been in a state of the most feverish excitement. Even those who were the most inclined to regard with abhorrence the private and political character of Wilkes, felt indignant at the circumstances of his arrest and imprisonment. Accordingly, on the day on which the Chief Justice delivered his judgment, not only were Westminster Hall and New Palace Yard thronged with anxious and excited thousands, but the result no sooner was announced to them, than the old Hall rang with such a shout of exultation, as had not been heard within its walls since the acquittal of the Seven Bishops. Ministers, as they speedily discovered to their cost, had committed a most suicidal act. They had not only converted the dangerous demagogue into a political martyr, but had invested him with an importance which, for several years to come, enabled him to set the Government at defiance.

The unwise prosecution of Wilkes, or rather the humiliation which his victory entailed upon the Crown, was necessarily highly annoying to the young King. Moreover, he had other reasons for being dissatisfied with the Grenville Ministry. The first wish of his heart was to establish a firm, painstaking, and vigorous Administration; yet the Grenville Ministry was weakness itself. "There is not a man of the Court side in the House of Commons," writes Lord Chesterfield, "who has either abilities or words enough to call a coach." * Again, mob-patriots and mob-dictation were the King's especial aversion, yet seldom had popular licentiousness been carried to a more intolerable extent. For instance, in the cider counties, a figure of Bute, clad in tartan and decorated with the blue riband of the Order of the Garter, was paraded about, leading a donkey distinguished by the insignia of royalty; † while, at

* Lord Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 371.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 280. "The King," writes Adams the American Envoy, at a much later period, "has an habitual contempt of patriots and

Exeter, so frightened were the magistrates at the attitude of the people, that they allowed an effigy of the Earl to hang for a fortnight from a gibbet near one of the principal gates of the city.* In the metropolis, affairs wore a still more threatening aspect. A criminal, on his way to execution on Kennington Common, was all but rescued by a mob; nor was it till the military had been sent for, and that night had nearly set in, that the officers of justice were enabled to carry the sentence of the law into effect. It was time—said the King to his first Minister—that a remedy should be found for such evils, or the mob would try to govern *him* next.†

patriotism; at least for what are called in this country [England] by those names." *Works of Adams*, vol. viii. p. 258.

* Harris's Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 371.

† Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 193.

CHAPTER XI.

Attempt of the King to reconstruct the Ministry—Failure of negotiations with Mr. Pitt—The Grenville ministry insist on Lord Bute retiring from London—The Duke of Bedford in the Cabinet—Proceedings against John Wilkes, moved in the House of Lords by the Earl of Sandwich—Popular judgment on Lord Sandwich—General Warrants judicially condemned—Wilkes expelled from the House of Commons.

It was under the circumstances which we have stated, that the King, to the dismay and anger of Grenville, not only intimated to him his intention of "strengthening his Government," but, in opposition to the "positive and repeated" advice of his Ministers, commenced a negotiation with the Earl of Hardwicke, to whom he proposed to assign the Presidency of the Council. The Ex-Chancellor, however, declined to act apart from the Duke of Newcastle, and Newcastle refused to act apart from the other "Great Whig Lords." Most willingly Lord Hardwicke would have persuaded the King at once to reinstate the Whig party in power. Not only, he sent word to the King, had his Majesty's grandfather been compelled to accept Administrations which were personally obnoxious to him, but even so great a monarch as William the Third had been similarly constrained. The King, however, manifested the greatest reluctance to follow the Earl's advice. His honour, he said, was at stake. He could never consent to accept a party "in gross."* July.

The King was still hesitating how he ought to act, when the royal closet was invaded by Grenville and his two

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 371, &c. Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 191. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 285.

colleagues, Lords Halifax and Egremont, who came to remonstrate with him on his conduct, as well as to demand guarantees for his future good behaviour. Halifax, the most amiable member of the triumvirate, and the most fluent speaker, broke the ice. He was followed by Grenville, who, in language such as Kings are rarely compelled to listen to, not only accused him of treason to his Ministers, but of having violated an assurance he had given them, that Lord Bute should no longer have secret access to the royal closet. The King, impatient and irritated, demanded ten days for deliberation, promising that if, at the end of that period, he should decide on retaining his present advisers, he would extend to them his fullest confidence and support.*

That interval Grenville, with the King's permission, passed in the country. "I have heard Mr. Grenville is at Wotton," writes the celebrated Charles Townshend, "relieving his vast mind from the fatigue of his omnipotent situation; and that for some weeks. Atlas has left the globe to turn upon its own axis. Surely he should be prompt when public credit labours, and he either mistakes the subject or slights the difficulty. This man has crept into a situation he cannot fill. He has assumed a personage his limbs cannot carry. He has jumped into a wheel he cannot turn. The summer-dream is passing away. Cold winter is coming on; and I will add to you that the storm must be stood, for there will be no shelter from Coalition, nor any escape by compromise. There has been too much insolence in the use of power; too much injustice to others; too much calumny spread at every turn." †

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 285–6; Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 192.

† Townshend MS. formerly in the possession of the late Right Hon. J. W. Croker. Grenville had recently offered Charles Townshend the post of First Lord of the Admiralty.

Grenville, as appears by his Diary, quitted London for Wotton on Wednesday the 3rd of August, and returned upon Tuesday the 18th.

Thus, the stipulated interval had passed away, and, on the 21st, the King had intimated to Grenville his intention of retaining his present Ministers in power, when the unexpected death, on that very day, of Lord Egremont gave rise to fresh hesitation in the royal mind.* The change, which this event occasioned in the language and manner of the King, escaped not the jealous watchfulness of Grenville, who accordingly deputed Halifax to reason and remonstrate with their royal master. But, when Halifax entered the royal closet it had only just been quitted by a far more Aug. 23
influential person than himself. The Duke of Bedford, on being apprised of Lord Egremont's death, had hurried up to London, and, having obtained an interview with the King, had represented to him in forcible terms the feebleness of the present Ministry, and urged him at once to send for Mr. Pitt. Although the return of the great Whig Lords to power was dreaded as much as ever by the King, yet, as he entertained some hope of

* Charles, second Earl of Egremont, expired at Cholmondely House, Piccadilly, on the 21st of August 1763, at the age of fifty-three. Slight as was the opinion which the King seems to have entertained for his abilities as a statesman, it would appear by the following extracts from Mr. Grenville's Diary, that his Majesty was not a little affected by his death. "*Sunday, 21st August.* The King sent many times in the day to enquire after Lord Egremont; at eight o'clock he expired, and Mr. Grenville went with Lord Halifax to the King to give him notice of it. His Majesty lamented the loss of his servant, and spoke in very high commendation of him." "*Monday 22nd.* The King spoke of nothing but Lord Egremont and his family to Mr. Grenville, and told him his thoughts must be too much disturbed by this misfortune to allow him to turn them to business, that therefore he did not expect it from him." "*Tuesday 23rd.* The King again talked of nothing but Lord Egremont, made Mr. Grenville give him a very particular account of his will, and enquired much after all the family."—*Grenville Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 194. "He [Lord Egremont]," writes Bishop Newton in his autobiography, "was observed to be remarkably cheerful several days before, and the very morning, he died: and it was while he was sitting at breakfast with his Lady, and reading a letter, that the fatal stroke was struck. He called for a glass of water, but before it could be given him he was insensible, and so continued till he died." *Bishop Newton's Works*, vol. i. p. 89.

being able to detach the "Great Commoner" from the alliance, the proposition was not an unpalatable one to him.

Accordingly, Lord Bute was authorized by the King to seek an interview with Pitt; not one of those imaginary clandestine ones, such as the suspicious Grenville was for ever picturing to himself, but one, in the open day, at Pitt's own residence in Jermyn Street. During their interview, which took place on the 25th of August, Pitt, after some hesitation, was induced to express his opinion at considerable length on the present state of public affairs. And what, inquired Bute, was there to prevent his expressing himself in similar terms to the King? "My Lord," replied Pitt, "I am not of his Majesty's Council: I hold no office in his service, and how therefore can I presume to demand an audience? The presumption would be too great."—"But suppose," said Bute, "that his Majesty should order you to attend him? You would not, I imagine, refuse?"—"The King's command," replied Pitt, "would make it my duty, and I should have no choice but to obey."*

On the following day, Friday the 26th, Pitt received from the King a note *open and unsealed*, requiring him to attend him on Saturday at noon at the Queen's palace in St. James's Park. Accordingly, at the appointed hour, the sedan-chair of Mr. Pitt—rendered conspicuous by a projecting leathern boot which gave ease to his gouty foot—was seen passing through the gateway of Buckingham House. Pitt himself remarked of this peculiar palanquin that it was as familiar to the public as if his name had been painted upon it.† The King received him very graciously, and not only listened attentively to him during an interview which lasted for three hours, but appointed a second meeting for the following Monday. According to

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 377.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 378. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 228.

Pitt, the King's manner on parting with him was that of a person apparently half convinced by the arguments and reasons to which he had been listening. So satisfied indeed was Pitt that he had satisfactorily paved the way for the return of the Whigs to power, that on reaching his own home he actually sent off despatches to the Dukes of Newcastle and Devonshire, preparing them for the probable event of their being immediately summoned to the royal presence.*

In the mean time, Grenville, having some business to transact with the King, had been confounded—on approaching the palace—on perceiving the "gouty chair" of his formidable brother-in-law waiting at the entrance. To add to his mortification, he was kept waiting for two hours in an antechamber, while his rival was closeted with the King. At length, Mr. Pitt having withdrawn, Grenville—who was no less offended with the Duke of Bedford on account of his interference, than with the King because of this his second revolt against his Ministers—was ushered into the royal presence. He found the King, as he himself informs us, "confused, flustered," and uncommunicative. "My reception," he writes to Halifax, "was a cold one; and no proposition was made, or seemed likely to be made, either relative to you or to myself."† Neither by the King nor by Grenville was any allusion made to the recent visit of Pitt. To Grenville, it afforded an opportunity of expatiating on his own grievances and those of his colleagues, till the King, apparently quite worn out by his tedious diffusiveness, drily intimated to him, by an allusion to the lateness of the hour, that he considered the audience at an end. Yet it was not without emotion that he saw his Minister depart from his presence. Twice he said impressively at parting—"Good

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. pp. 377–9. Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 469, 2nd Series.

† Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 97.

morrow, Mr. Grenville!"—"It was a phrase," writes Grenville, "that the King had never used to him before."* The King, indeed, notwithstanding Grenville's tiresome lectures and perpetual jealousies, would seem to have conceived something like a personal regard for his painstaking Minister. When Pitt, at their second conference, proposed to the King to confer on Lord Halifax the lucrative post of Paymaster of the Forces, his Majesty interfered on behalf of Grenville. "But, Mr. Pitt," he said, "I had designed that for poor George Grenville: he is your near relation, and you once loved him."†

The second interview between the young King and the veteran statesman, which took place on the appointed day, Monday the 29th, unhappily proved far less satisfactory than the former one. "All tongues," according to Walpole, "were let loose to enquire, guess, invent, or assign causes" for the rupture.‡ Lord Chesterfield, in a letter to his son, admits his inability to discover the truth. "Would you know," he writes, "what it broke off upon you must ask the newsmongers, and the coffee-houses, who, I dare say, know it all very minutely; but I, who am not apt to know anything that I do not know, humbly and honestly confess that I cannot tell you. Probably one party asked too much, and the other would grant too little."§ In the unsupported opinion of Lord Shelburne, the negotiation on the part of the Court had alike commenced and ended in insincerity. Pitt, however, who was better informed, was of a different opinion. He was not only satisfied, as he told Lord Hardwicke, that the King and Bute were sincere when the latter opened the negotiation, but that the King was even "earnest" for its success. "Were he examined upon oath," he added, "he could not pretend to say

* Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 196.

† Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 379.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 290.

§ Lord Chesterfield's Letters, Edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. pp. 369–70.

upon what this negotiation broke off; whether upon any particular point or upon the general complexion of the whole." The King, he said, listened patiently to his arguments in favour of reinstating the Whig party in power, only occasionally making use of interjections to the effect that his honour was at stake. At length the King suddenly broke up the conference: "I see, (or I fear) Mr. Pitt," he said, "this will not do. My honour is concerned, and I must support it."*

In the mean time, Grenville, on the day which intervened between Pitt's two audiences, had received a summons from the King to attend upon him that evening at eight o'clock. On entering the royal closet, he found his Majesty in a state of great perturbation of mind. Mr. Pitt, said the King, had endeavoured to impose terms to him which, rather than submit to, he would prefer to die on the spot on which he stood.† He then explained the circumstances which had induced him to send for that imperious statesman. It was not, he said, that he had any wish to rid himself of his present Ministers, whose general conduct he approved, and who had "served him well," but the Government, he complained, was a weak one, and he desired to recruit it from the ranks of Opposition. As an instance of its weakness, he alluded with evident soreness Aug. 28.

* Harris's Life of the Earl of Hardwicke, vol. iii. p. 380. Adolphus's History of England, vol. i. p. 120, 4th Edition. The discrepancies in the accounts which the King and Mr. Pitt severally gave of what took place at their first interview are considered by Adolphus to have been in some degree owing to Pitt's "rapid and commanding eloquence," which prevented the King's fully comprehending at the time the "inevitable tendency of Pitt's arrangement,—that of subjecting the throne to the domination of certain powerful families." On the other hand, the well-known rapidity, and somtimes even confusion, of the King's utterance, when in a state of great excitement, may possibly have induced a like misconception on the part of Mr. Pitt.

† "You must have heard," writes the Duke of Bedford on the 5th of September, "that Mr. Pitt has been sent for, and his friends, the discontented great lords, have followed him to Court; but their demands were so exorbitant—I may say insolent—that the King, after having found what ill use they would have made of his moderation, has determined to do without them, and I doubt not his conduct will be approved by the most considerable, and indeed all the considerate part of the nation." *Bedford Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 240.

to the shameful manner in which the lower orders had of late been allowed to set the laws at defiance. He had intimated, he said, to Mr. Pitt his wish to confer on him the Secretary's seals vacant by the death of Lord Egremont; to appoint the Duke of Newcastle to some high office in the State, and to concede to each statesman a fair share of the distribution of power and place. Pitt, however, according to the King, would assent to no such compromise. He was "a poor, infirm man," he said, "declining in years as well as in health;" his infirmities disqualified him from constant attendance in Parliament; he owed his influence to the good opinion of his friends and of the powerful party with which he was associated; neither he nor his friends would "come into Government" except as a party; the vessel of State, freighted as it at present was with Tories, must necessarily sink; it ought at once to be broken up, and an Administration formed on true Whig Revolution principles.*

The demands pressed upon the King by Pitt at their second conference, were, according to his Majesty's further account, even more exorbitant than those which had been submitted to him at the first. They were such, he told Grenville, that he had plainly intimated to Pitt that under no circumstances would he accede to them.† What those demands precisely were, it would be now no easy matter to ascertain. According to the high authority of the Duke of Bedford, the Whig Lords, through their spokesman Pitt, not only went to such lengths as to insist upon the dismissal from the King's service of such of his servants as had voted in Parliament in favour of the Peace with France, but even of those who there was reason to believe were favourable to the measure.‡ "Should I consent to

* Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 197, 198, 199. † *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 201.
‡ Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 241. Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 470, 2nd Series.

these demands of yours, Mr. Pitt," said the King, "there would be nothing left for me to do but to take the Crown from my own head and place it upon yours, and then patiently submit my neck to the block." * At this second conference, according to another well-informed contemporary, "the style of a dictator was assumed by Pitt; terms were no longer proposed but prescribed, and conditions exacted that nothing but the most abject meanness, or most absolute despondency, could assent to. A total *bouleversement* of the Government was demanded; an universal proscription of all who had served it boldly threatened, with a few invidious exceptions." †—"It is hardly conceivable," writes the Duke of Bedford, "how they could have the insolence to propose to the King to turn out, by a general sweep, every one that had faithfully stood by him, and to take in all those who had acted the direct contrary part."

In the mean time, the King, by the failure of his overtures, had placed himself in a very humiliating as well as painful position. "My heart," writes Charles Townshend, "bleeds for my sovereign, who is thus made the sport of wrestling factions." ‡ The Sovereign, as Lord Chesterfield points out, should on no account figure as sole Plenipotentiary in a negotiation, in which success is uncertain.

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 471, 2nd Series. The demand which is said to have been most unpalatable to the King was the appointment of Wilkes's friend—Lord Temple—to be first Lord of the Treasury. "The Treasury for Lord Temple," writes Walpole, "was the real stone of offence." *Reign of George 3*, vol. i. p. 289. Yet when Pitt quitted the royal closet it was with the impression that the King had himself proposed Lord Temple for the Treasury. *Harris's Life of Hardwicke*, vol. iii. p. 379. See also *Grenville Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 198.

† Lord Barrington also writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell;—"All treaty is at an end; the King deeming Mr. Pitt's demands unreasonable, though he was ready to have gone a great way to make everything easy." *Ellis's Original Letters, 2nd Series*, vol. iv. pp. 466, 469–70. See likewise *Walpole's Reign of George 3*, vol. i. p. 289. "Pitt," writes Walpole, "went back to the King with a schedule of terms greatly enlarged."—"In talking over the system," writes Lord Lyttelton, "Pitt's demands were thought too high and rejected."—*Philimore's Memoirs of Lord Lyttelton*, vol. ii. p. 642.

‡ MS. Letter to Dr. Brocklesby, dated 11 September 1763.

Loss of dignity must of necessity be the result of failure. "Louis the Fourteenth," adds his lordship, "never sat down before a town in person, that was not certain to be taken." * In every respect the King's position was a most unenviable one. Only a few months had passed, since he had emphatically averred that no consideration should ever again induce him to submit to the dominion of the "Great Families," yet, as his affairs now stood, he was reduced to the unbecoming alternative, either of retracting his words, or else of courting back to power the tedious and inexorable Grenville. Bent as the Whigs of the last century may have been on enslaving their sovereign, they nevertheless entertained a respect for the kingly office, which almost invariably rendered them personally deferential to their royal master. In the closet, even the haughty Pitt was respectful almost to servility, and the powerful Newcastle humble even to cringing. Grenville, on the contrary, instead of endeavouring to win over his sovereign by courtesy and conciliation, had learned to look upon him as a school-boy. The Sovereign, according to his political creed, ought to be nothing more than a mere pageant of state; and he certainly acted up to that democratic axiom. Yet notwithstanding the little consideration which the King had reason to expect from Grenville, he apparently never for a moment regretted his rejection of Pitt's demands. Rather —he told his assembled Ministers when he reinstated them —than consent to be enslaved by any class of his subjects, he would endure any extremities; he would even retire to his German Electorate.†

In the mean time, if the King had committed a grave error, so also had the several leaders of the two great parties in the State been entirely mistaken in respect to the character and motives of their sovereign. As yet, appa-

* Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 370.
† Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 471, 2nd Series.

rently, not one of them had formed an adequate conception of that strong will, that unflinching personal courage, that earnest anxiety to do what was right, and that resolute determination to resist injustice, which afterwards—in many a crisis of political or personal peril—so eminently characterized the conduct of George the Third, but which for the present were unfortunately counteracted by the drawbacks of a rapid utterance, and a nervous manner, as well as by the effects of secluded habits, and an imperfect education. On his accession to the throne, as he himself confessed to Lord North in 1778, he had been "quite ignorant of public business."* No sooner, however, did he discover his deficiencies, than he appears to have set himself diligently and anxiously to work to recover lost time; thus acquiring—not only those business-like habits, and knowledge of state affairs and official duties, in which he was subsequently surpassed by none of his successive Ministers—but also that familiarity with books, which enabled him to converse, on no unequal terms, with the many eminent men of literature and science, with whom, during his long life, it was his fortune to come into contact. Even at so early a period as the 5th of January 1761, we find one of his Ministers, William Lord Barrington, writing to Sir Andrew Mitchell—"Nothing can be more amiable, more virtuous, better disposed, than our present Master. He applies himself thoroughly to his affairs; he understands them to an astonishing degree. His faculties seem to me equal to his good intentions, and nothing can be more agreeable or satisfactory than doing business with him. A most uncommon attention, a quick and just conception, great mildness, great civility, which takes nothing from his dignity, caution and firmness, are conspicuous in the highest degree."† In equal terms of praise, another of

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 118.

† Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 430.

his Ministers, Charles Townshend, speaks of his good intentions and inestimable virtues.*

In the mean while, the King's distress at having to receive back the Grenville Administration had evidently been acute. The chief obstacle to the revival of a better understanding between him and his Ministers, was Bute. The prominent part, which that nobleman had played in the late negotiation with Pitt, had rendered him more than ever the object of Grenville's jealousy and suspicion. It was in fact Grenville's firm conviction that, so long as Bute was allowed to remain within a day's journey of Buckingham House or Kew, no Administration could calculate on being secure for an hour. It was to no purpose that the King promised Grenville his future and fullest confidence and support, assuring him that henceforth he would "take his advice, and his alone." In vain he showed him a letter from Bute, "speaking with the greatest regard imaginable of Mr. Grenville, and advising the King to give his whole confidence to him." In vain he explained to him, that Bute himself had become convinced of the mischief occasioned to the King's affairs by the constant association of his name with that of his Sovereign, and had consequently volunteered to "retire absolutely from all business." † Nothing would satisfy Grenville, till thirty miles lay between Bute and the scenes of his former influence and intrigues. Moreover, in this undignified crusade against the King and his early friend, Grenville was only too zealously hounded on by his colleagues, the Earls of Halifax and Sandwich. ‡ It was only on the condition of Bute's retreat into the

* MS. Letter to Dr. Brocklesby.

† Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 200, 201.

‡ See two letters from Lord Sandwich to the Duke of Bedford, dated severally 26 and 28 September 1763, in the Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 250, 251. "The retiring from the King's presence and councils," writes Sandwich, "is an *absolute condition on which this Administration stands.*"—"I hope, when your Grace comes to town the middle of the week, that you will press this point with Mr. Grenville,

country that they consented to continue in office. No consideration whatever was shown him. The Ministry grudged him every hour that he remained in London. Less obdurate foes would have taken into account that the fallen Earl had a large establishment to break up; that Lady Bute had no fewer than six daughters to remove from South Audley Street; and further that he urgently needed the privilege of a short sojourn in London, to enable him to complete the purchase of his future princely residence, Luton. It was to no purpose that the King condescended to interfere on behalf of his former Minister. Grenville and his colleagues were inexorable. Scarcely more than ten days after they had compounded for his banishment, we find them—at a Cabinet dinner at Lord Sandwich's—arriving at the unanimous resolution that Bute's "retreat must be immediately carried into effect."* Nevertheless Bute continued to linger in London for another month; a delay which, added to his refusal to take up his residence on the Continent, afforded a pretext for depriving him of the post of Keeper of the Privy Purse to the King, which hitherto he had been permitted to retain.† The appointment, thus vacated, the King had hoped to have the satisfaction of offering to one whom he had known as a child, and whom he highly respected—Sir William Breton, one of the Grooms of his Bedchamber. But even this graceful testimony of personal regard was cavilled at by the imperious Grenville. Sir William, he insisted, was a friend of Lord Bute, and the world would attribute the appointment to the backstairs influence of the Earl. This additional demand on the

Sept. 9.

who wants a little spurring in this single article." Again—"Lord Halifax is warm, if that can be, to a fault, with regard to Lord Bute's retreat." One would have thought, from the haughty demands pressed by these persons upon their sovereign, that instead of the Grenville Administration being one of the worst and weakest on record, its existence was absolutely necessary for the salvation of the country.

* Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 206.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 298.

King's forbearance seems to have been beyond what human patience could endure. "Good God! Mr. Grenville,"
Sept. 30. exclaimed the King, "am I to be suspected after all I have done?"—"Not by me;" replied Grenville;—"I cannot doubt your intentions after all you have said to me; but such is the present language and suspicion of the world."* At length Bute really turned his back upon London, and Grenville breathed freely again. The day of the month, and even of the week, are duly recorded by him in his Diary;—"*Wednesday*, *October*, 5th, Lord Bute went out of town to Luton in Bedfordshire."†

Happily, Bute's departure reconciled Grenville to his Sovereign. Henceforth we find repeated notices in the Minister's private Diary, of the "openness and confidence," and "great ease and confidence," with which the King conversed with him; of his Majesty's "extreme approbation of his conduct," as well as of the pleasure which the King seemed to take in promoting his relatives and friends.‡

In the mean time, Grenville had succeeded in strengthening his Administration by the accession of the powerful Bedford party. The Duke of Bedford was appointed President of the Council in the room of the veteran Earl Granville,
Sept. 9. and the Earl of Sandwich Secretary of State in the room of Lord Egremont. One might have thought that the completion of these desirable arrangements, combined with Grenville being now in possession of the full confidence and support of his Sovereign, would have been sufficiently satisfactory to him. But, unhappily, jealousy of Bedford now took possession of his mind. The King did his utmost to remove his apprehensions and fortunately succeeded. He would uphold him, he said, to the utmost of his power; not only against his open political opponents, but against his

* Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 210.
† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 211.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. pp. 217, 222, 224, 239, 498, 505, 512, 514.

colleagues; against the Duke of Bedford himself.* When, about this time, Grenville, with no very good taste, chose to revert to the King's recent untoward overtures to Mr. Pitt, his Majesty's rebuke to his Minister was alike a mild and a dignified one. "Mr. Grenville," he said, "let us not look back, but let us only look forward: nothing of that sort shall ever happen again."† The public, too, by degrees began to do justice to the rectitude of the motives which had influenced the recent political conduct of the King. To Sir Andrew Mitchell, Mr. Erskine writes on the 27th of September;—"The exorbitant demands of the Great Man were generally condemned; the spirit of the King universally applauded. Even the City begin to change their style, and the three Lords, taken in, have the approbation of the Public." ‡

Most unfortunately, Grenville had by this time made up his mind to open a fresh campaign, not only in the House of Commons but in the House of Lords, against Wilkes and the Press. Wilkes, it will be remembered, was the reputed, if not the real, author of an obscene and blasphemous poem, entitled "An Essay on Woman," composed in imitation of Pope's "Essay on Man." As Pope had inscribed his poem to Lord Bolingbroke, commencing it with the words—"Awake, my St. John!" &c., so was this impure production inscribed to a beautiful courtesan of the day:—

"Awake, my Fanny," &c. §

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* Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 209. † *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 205.

‡ Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 472. Second Series. The third Lord referred to was John Earl of Egmont, who had been appointed First Lord of the Admiralty on the 10th of September.

§ Fanny Murray, daughter of a musician at Bath, was successively mistress of the honourable John Spencer, better known as "Jack Spencer," and of Beau Nash. She was married to a person of the name of Ross, and died in 1770. See *Notes and Queries, Second Series*, vol. 4, pp. 1, 41. The spurious editions of the "Essay on Woman" make the poem commence—

"Awake, my Sandwich! leave all meaner joys," &c.

The grossest part of this gross production were the notes, written in imitation of Warburton's commentaries upon Pope's Works, and most irreverently professing to be from the pen of that right reverend prelate.

To obtain a copy of this work, and by its means to prosecute and crush the popular demagogue as a convicted blasphemer and libeller, was the paramount object of Grenville and his colleagues. Had their zeal, instead of having for its object the ruin of a troublesome political foe, been prompted by a true regard for the interests of religion and morality, one might have half forgiven even the unworthy means by which the Ministry attempted to secure his conviction. But, as it happened, nothing could be more unjustifiable than those means. Wilkes, it should be borne in view, had made no attempt to foist his obnoxious "Essay" upon the public. No single innocent mind had been tainted by its lasciviousness; no single Christian faith had been disturbed by its profaneness. Only thirteen copies had been printed, the circulation of which had been restricted to a few intimate congenial spirits, doubtless as hardened in debauchery as Wilkes himself. Moreover, to prevent publicity, he had printed the work at a private press of his own in Great George Street, which, so long as private documents only issued from it, he had a right to expect would remain uninterfered with by the law. Under the circumstances, the Government, as may easily be imagined, had encountered no slight difficulty in obtaining a copy of the work. Sandwich had in all probability received a presentation copy, but even Sandwich, we presume, would have shrunk from converting into a legal instrument of oppression, the confidential gift of a friend. Another copy had fallen into the hands of Government at the time of the seizure of Wilkes's papers, but, in this case, the means by which it had been obtained had been denounced to be illegal, alike in too high a quarter and at too recent a period, to admit of its being

turned to the arbitrary account for which it was required. In this dilemma one Kidgell, chaplain to the profligate Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry, came to the assistance of Ministers, and by means of bribing one of the printers employed by Wilkes, obtained a copy of the poem which he placed in the hands of the Solicitor of the Treasury.*

Of the men of rank and pleasure who had recently courted Wilkes's company and enjoyed his social wit, one of the most intimate with him, as well as one of the most licentious, was the new Secretary of State, the Earl of Sandwich.† Yet Sandwich it was, who, with inconceivable baseness and effrontery, now undertook the sorry business of bringing the "Essay on Woman" under the notice of the House of Lords, with the avowed object of blasting the reputation and ruining the fortunes of his friend. Parliament assembled on the 15th of November, up to which time no suspicion seems to have been entertained by Wilkes of the pitiless storm which was about to burst over his head. On that day, even before the King's Speech could be taken into consideration, Sandwich placed his friend's poem upon the table of the House; at the same time denouncing it in a pharisaical speech as a most blasphemous, obscene, and abominable libel. Among those who listened to him with astonished ears was his old Medmenham Abbey

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 310, 311.

† John, fourth Earl of Sandwich, is reported to have been born in 1718. If the peerages have correctly reported the year of his birth, he must have filled the high situations of Plenipotentiary to the States General, and First Lord of the Admiralty, either before, or shortly after, he had completed his twenty-ninth year. His first appointment, as First Lord of the Admiralty, took place in December 1748; in April 1763 he was reappointed to that office; in September 1763 he was appointed Secretary of State, and again in December 1770. In January 1771 he was placed for the third time at the head of the Board of Admiralty, over which Board he presided till the month of March 1782. *Beatson's Political Index*, vol. i. pp. 387, 389, 391, 404. "He was a most profligate, abandoned character," writes Lord Chesterfield, "but with good abilities." *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, vol. 2, p. 479, *edited by Earl Stanhope*. Besides his fame as a boon companion, Lord Sandwich was distinguished by his passion for music, and was also the author of a "Voyage to the Mediterranean." He died April 20, 1792.

associate, Sir Francis Dashwood, now Lord Le Despencer. Never before, he said, had he heard the Devil preach.* At the requisition of Lord Sandwich, several of the most offensive passages were read aloud to the great disgust of many of the Peers, and of Lord Lyttelton in particular, who is described as groaning in spirit, and entreating that the House might hear no more. But it was the Bishop of Gloucester, the pretended author of the infamous notes, who naturally displayed the greatest anger and disgust. His rage indeed was such as to be little in keeping with his sacred profession. The blackest fiends in Hell, he said, would not keep company with Wilkes; at the same time he begged pardon of Satan for comparing them together. It was to the credit of Pitt that, although no one could have a greater horror of vice and impiety than himself, he was the first to raise his voice against the scandalous means which had been resorted to by Ministers in order to entrap their adversary. "Why," he exclaimed, "do not they search the Bishop of Gloucester's study for heresy?"† Subsequently the Lords pronounced the "Essay on Woman" to be a "most scandalous, obscene, and impious libel," and the author guilty of a breach of privilege towards the Bishop.

In the House of Commons, the Ministerial attack on Wilkes was based on different grounds. Agreeably with a message from the throne, the House took into its considera-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 311, *note.*

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 311, 312. Charles Churchill, the poet, not long afterwards avenged the Bishop's attack on his friend Wilkes by some verses of almost frightful severity.

> "He, in the highest reign of noon,
> Bawled bawdy songs to a Psalm tune;
> Lived with men infamous and vile;
> Trucked his salvation for a smile;
> To catch their humour caught their plan,
> And laughed *at* God to laugh *with* man;
> Praised them when living with each breath,
> And damned their memories after death."
>
> *The Duellist.* Book 3.

tion the celebrated Number 45 of the *North Briton*, which they forthwith pronounced to be a false, scandalous, and seditious libel; at the same time ordering it to be burned by the hands of the common hangman. Wilkes, on his part, detailed, to the indignation of every true lover of freedom who listened to him, the circumstances of his recent arrest, and the seizure of his papers; insisting, as he proceeded, that the privileges of Parliament had been grossly outraged in his person. "On the 30th of April," he said, "I was made a prisoner in my own house by some of the King's messengers. I demanded by what authority they had forced their way into my room, and was shown a warrant, in which no person was named in particular, but, generally, the authors, printers and publishers of a 'seditious and treasonable paper, entitled *The North Briton*, No. 45.' The messengers insisted on my going before Lord Halifax, which I absolutely refused, because the warrant was, I thought, illegal, and did not respect me. I applied, by my friends, to the Court of Common Pleas for the Habeas Corpus, and I enlarged on this subject to Mr. Webb, the Solicitor of the Treasury. I was, however, hurried away to the Tower by another warrant, which declared *me* the author and publisher of a most scandalous and seditious libel. The word *treasonable* was dropped, yet I was detained a close prisoner, and no person was suffered to come near me for almost three days, although my counsel, and several of my friends, demanded admittance in order to concert the means of recovering my liberty. My house was plundered, my bureaus broken open by order of two of your Members,* and all my papers carried away. After six days' imprisonment, I was discharged by the unanimous judgment of the Court of Common Pleas that the privilege of this House extended to my case." † Wilkes's protests

* Robert Wood, Under Secretary of State, and Webb, Solicitor of the Treasury.

† Almon's Memoirs and Corresp. of Wilkes, vol. ii. pp. 5, 6.

and appeals, however, proved of little avail. It was only too evident that his enemies would prove too strong for him. Ruin and disgrace, in fact, stared him in the face.

It was during this day's proceedings in Parliament that a scene took place in the House of Commons which occasioned considerable excitement among the members, and which was very nearly being productive of tragical consequences. It had happened, that in one of the earlier numbers of the *North Briton*, Samuel Martin, Member for Camelford and formerly Secretary of the Treasury under the successive administrations of Newcastle and Bute, had been grossly stigmatized as a "low fellow and dirty tool of power." This gross affront had not been resented by him at the time; nor was it till the House of Commons commenced their crusade against Wilkes as the author of the *North Briton*, that Martin thought proper to lay before them any complaint of his personal wrongs. He now, however, rose from his seat trembling with rage, and having called the attention of the House to the attack upon himself, denounced the author of it, twice over, as a cowardly, scandalous, and malignant scoundrel. It was confidently asserted at the time that Martin had been incited by Ministers to act as he did with the deliberate object of taking away Wilkes's life in a duel; nor could it be denied that for many months past Martin, while residing in the country, had been constantly practising at pistol-firing.* But, on the other hand, had Martin really desired

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 317, 318.

"—— Should some villain, in support
And zeal for a despairing Court—
Placing in craft his confidence,
And making honour a pretence
To do a deed of deepest shame,
Whilst filthy lucre is his aim—
Should such a wretch, with sword or knife,
Contrive to practise 'gainst the life

to fix a duel upon Wilkes, the House of Commons, in which the power of the Speaker to prevent hostilities is paramount, would scarcely, one would think, have been selected by him to be the scene of provocation. As it happened, Wilkes made no reply at the time, and consequently the House had no excuse for interfering.

Wilkes, however, had no intention of allowing the matter to drop at this stage. "The next day," writes Walpole, "when I went down to the House, I found all the members standing on the floor in great hubbub; questioning, hearing, and eagerly discussing I knew not what. I soon learned that Wilkes about two hours before had been dangerously wounded by Martin in a duel." * Lords Halifax and Sandwich instantly hurried off with the news to the palace, where they found the King closeted with his First Minister. "Somebody scratched at the closet-door," writes Grenville, "and Lord Halifax and Lord Sandwich came in to acquaint his Majesty that Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Martin had fought a duel upon words which had passed in the House of Commons; that Mr. Wilkes was wounded but not dangerously." † The leading circumstances of the encounter may be briefly related. A correspondence had taken place early in the morning on the day of the duel, in the course

> Of one, who, honoured through the land,
> For Freedom made a glorious stand,
> Whose chief, perhaps his only, crime
> Is, (if plain truth at such a time
> May dare her sentiments to tell,)
> That he his country loved too well:
> May he—but words are all too weak
> The feelings of my heart to speak—
> May he—O for a noble curse
> Which might his very marrow pierce—
> The general contempt engage,
> And be the Martin of his age!"
>
> *The Duellist*, Book 1.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 317. See also a letter from Lord Barrington, dated the 17th of November, in *Ellis's Original Letters*, vol. iv. p. 478. Second series.

† Grenville Corresp., vol. ii. p. 224.

of which Wilkes not only avowed himself the author of the obnoxious paper in the *North Briton*, but added his conviction that Martin's tardy vindication of his honour would never have been made but that he had anticipated the interference of the Speaker. Martin, on his part, retorted by again applying to Wilkes the words of "malignant and infamous scoundrel;" adding that, as far as the further epithet "cowardly" was concerned, he was willing to afford him an opportunity of proving whether it was justly applicable to him or not. He further desired that Wilkes would immediately meet him with pistols in the Ring in Hyde Park, where he would wait for him for one hour.

Wilkes was only too well aware how little mercy he had to expect from the Government in the event of his killing his adversary, and accordingly, in order to have at hand the means of immediate flight, he proceeded to the ground in a postchaise. Martin was waiting for him in the Ring, where, so soon as the preliminary arrangements could be made, they took their respective places. At the first exchange of shots Martin's ball went wide of his adversary. Wilkes's pistol flashed in the pan. At the second fire the latter was on the point of discharging his weapon, when the ball from Martin's pistol lodged in his side, and his own pistol dropped to the ground. The profusion of blood which flowed from him created the impression that the wound was a mortal one, and accordingly Martin, much distressed, rushed to his assistance. Wilkes, however, in spite of Martin's repeated entreaties to be allowed to remain with him, insisted on his instantly seeking safety by flight; adding that he had behaved like a man of honour and that he would never betray him. No less magnanimous was Wilkes's conduct on reaching his home in Great George Street. In order that no evidence, in the event of his death, might appear against Martin, he returned his adversary the written challenge which he had received from him in the morning; refused to divulge the

name of the person from whose hands he had received his wound, and further enjoined that should it prove a mortal one, no prosecution should be instituted by his family. Neither, prostrated as he was by pain and harassed by difficulties of every description, did his accustomed wit and good humour abandon him. When his medical attendant insisted upon the exclusion of all company from his sick chamber—"I will not admit," he said slyly, "even my own wife." *

Stretched on a bed of sickness, Wilkes had now ample leisure to concert his present plans and consider his future prospects. With a prosecution impending over him in the House of Commons, as well as in the House of Lords; threatened with an adverse judgment in the Court of King's Bench, and with the prospect before him of a long and irksome imprisonment, it was plain that England no longer afforded either a safe or an agreeable asylum for the discomfited patriot. Thus Grenville, backed by the authority of Parliament and the power of the Crown, had succeeded in defeating him for a time—but the final battle had yet to be fought. Wilkes, it is true, was on his departure to encounter poverty and exile; yet it was difficult for his triumph to have been greater than at the present moment. He had stood alone in the breach when an infatuated Administration had attempted to sap one of the corner-stones of the Constitution. Every true lover of freedom felt himself to be his debtor. Whatever may have been his individual faults, he was, as Lord Chesterfield observes, "an intrepid defender of our rights and liberties." Not only did the great mass of the people of England remain true to him, but even those who most lamented his private vices, and disapproved of his political violence, continued to overlook his backslidings in the disgust which they felt at the treatment he had received from the Government. The evident and notorious fact that revenge, and not the interests of religion, had prompted the

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 335.

late prosecution in the House of Lords; the needless indecency with which the ears of that grave assembly had been polluted by the revelation of impurities which had been intended solely for the private entertainment of a dozen graceless men of pleasure; and lastly the very indifferent private reputations of Sandwich, and of the other Government informers, enlisted advocates on behalf of Wilkes even among the most virtuous of the community.

It was upon Sandwich, indeed, that the main torrent of public indignation and disgust very righteously poured. Even his own friends and supporters, on any allusion being made to his canting philippic in the House of Lords, were scarcely able to suppress a titter. Some time afterwards, Thomas Townshend proceeded to such lengths in the House of Commons as to denounce him as the "most profligate sad dog in the kingdom." The wicked Earl was in the House at the time; a fact of which Townshend seems to have been cognisant. "He hoped," he added, "that he was present, and, if he was not, he was ready to call him so to his face in any company."* Yet not only was Sandwich himself about this time expelled the Beaf Steak Club for blasphemy, but within little more than a fortnight—at a club to which Wilkes and he severally belonged, "composed of players and the loosest revellers of the age"—they had sat together bandying ribald wit and listening to obscene catches.† It was at one of these debauched jollifications that Lord Sandwich put the impudent and well-known question to Wilkes whether he expected to end his career by being hanged or from the effects of a scandalous disorder which he tersely named? "My Lord!" was the admirable reply, "that might much depend upon whether I embraced your lordship's mistress or your principles."‡ Whenever Sandwich appeared in public,

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 317, 325. Ed. 1857.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 134. Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 313.

‡ The credit of having originated this once celebrated witticism was formerly

popular scorn followed him. It happened that a few days after the debate in the House of Lords, the "Beggars' Opera" was performed at Covent Garden Theatre. The play passed off quietly till towards its close, when Macheath exclaims—"That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me I own surprised me." * It would have been a dull audience not to have comprehended at once the affinity between Jemmy Twitcher and the renegade Secretary of State, and accordingly there arose simultaneously from gallery, and pit, and boxes, a cry of "*Jemmy Twitcher! Jemmy Twitcher!*"—a name by which, during the remainder of his days, Lord Sandwich was as familiarly known as by the title which he had derived from his forefathers.† In the eyes of College Dignitaries alone, he seems to have found favour. When, in March following, he was a competitor, with a highly accomplished and respectable nobleman, Philip second Earl of Hardwicke, for the honour of being elected High Steward of the University of Cambridge, he was defeated only by one or two doubtful votes. Happily the youth of the University in some degree retrieved its credit. The Earl having, in the course of the following month, been invited to dine at Trinity College, the undergraduates made his appearance the signal for retiring from the hall.‡ If anything was wanted to com-

claimed by the French. It was a retort, according to French authority, of Mirabeau to Cardinal Maury, while seated next to him in the National Assembly. Wilkes's prior claim to it has, however, been established by Lord Brougham. "I heard it myself," he writes, "from the Duke of Norfolk, who was present when the dialogue took place many years before the French Revolution." *Sketches of the Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 431. Edition, 1858. Dutens in his *Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement*, erroneously attributes the witticism to Foote. Vol. v. p. 26.

* "That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me I own surprised me. 'Tis a proof that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people." *Act* 3. *Scene* 4.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 313, 314.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 396. The conduct of the undergraduates naturally gave much offence to their superiors. The following were the names of the recusants—Phillips, Davies, Cotton, Neale, Fox, Jones, Wilbraham, Marwood, Shippersdon, Spranger, Cobbold, Norris, Paddey, Bennett, Frank, Clowes, Campbell, Hardinge, Graham, Brisco, Abbot, Ellis, Kershaw, Mattey, Harrison, Pinnock, Popham, Ridgill, Twisden,

plete the popular odium which rested on Sandwich at this period, it was effected by the powerful and withering verse of Churchill.*

In the mean time, Wilkes had not been forgotten in his sick chamber. Every opportunity was seized by the people of deifying their idol, and at the same time of throwing insult on the Government. A significant proof of this state of the public feeling was afforded on the 3rd of December, the day appointed for the unwise measure of publicly burning Number 45 of the *North Briton*. The hangman was about to commit the paper to the flames, when suddenly a universal shout of "Wilkes and Liberty" arose from the dense crowd of persons who had assembled in front of the Royal Exchange. Almost as suddenly the peace-officers were put to flight. Men, evidently of superior birth and education, goaded on the mob from the balconies and windows of the neighbouring houses. One of the glass-

Smyth, Kreyk, Clutterbuck, Daniel, Hills, Panton, Dobson, Davidson, Churchill, Carter, Scafe, Butcher, Langley, Bird, Green, Lake, Wright. *Churchill's Works, by W. Tooke*, vol. iii. p. 161, *note*. Ed. Boston, 1854. It was on the occasion of Lord Sandwich coming forward as candidate for the High Stewardship of the University of Cambridge, that Gray, the poet, composed his bitter verses, entitled—"The Candidate, or, the Cambridge Courtship" :—

> "When sly Jemmy Twitcher had smugged up his face,
> With a lick of court white-wash, and pious grimace,
> A wooing he went," &c.

* See *The Duellist*, Books 1 and 3.

> "Nature designed him in a rage
> To be the Wharton of his age;
> But, having given all the sin,
> Forgot to put the virtues in.
> To run a horse, to make a match,
> To revel deep, to roar a catch;
> To knock a tottering watchman down,
> To sweat a woman of the town;" &c.
>
> * * * *
>
> "His bills sent in, too great to pay,
> Too proud to speak to, if he meets
> The honest tradesman whom he cheats.
> Too infamous to have a friend,
> Too bad for bad men to commend."—Book 3.

windows of the Sheriff's coach was smashed and he himself wounded in the face by a burning brand; and lastly, in lieu of the *North Briton*, which was wrested from the hangman, a jack-*boot* and a petticoat were flung into the flames amidst the exulting cheers of the multitude.*

Three days afterwards, in Westminster Hall, Wilkes gained a victory of a more creditable kind. After a hearing which lasted for fifteen hours, a special jury returned a verdict against the Under Secretary of State, Robert Wood, for the illegal seizure of Wilkes's papers; at the same time awarding the plaintiff one thousand pounds damages and Dec. 6. full costs.† It was on this occasion that Lord Camden confirmed his famous judgment against the legality of General Warrants. The righteousness of that judgment was appreciated throughout the length and breadth of the land. The Corporations of Dublin, Bath, Exeter, and Norwich, enrolled the name of the Lord Chief Justice among those of their freemen; while the citizens of London not only presented him with its freedom, but, under a portrait of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which they suspended from the walls of Guildhall, they placed the following graceful and flattering inscription—"*In honorem tanti viri Angliæ libertatis lege assertoris*"—"in honour of so eminent a man, the assertor by the law of English liberty."‡ Some months previously to Wilkes gaining his celebrated verdict, one of the printers of the *North Briton* obtained three hundred pounds damages in the Court of Common Pleas against the Messengers of the Secretary of State's Office, on account of the illegal seizure of his person by General Warrant. At a later period, the abstract question of the legality of General Warrants came before Lord Mansfield,

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 330. Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 144. Annual Register for 1763, p. 144.

† State Trials, vol. xix. cols. 1153—1168. Annual Register for 1763, p. 145.

‡ 17 May 1765, State Trials, vol. xix. col. 1023, &c.

who affirmed the judgment previously pronounced by Lord Camden.

In the mean time, Grenville and his colleagues, too infatuated to profit by these unmistakable and alarming demonstrations of public opinion, continued to persist in their untoward persecution of Wilkes. From both Houses of Parliament they obtained the fullest support. The Commons cited him to appear at the bar of their House, and, on his pleading his inability to obey the summons, on account of the severity of his wound, Dr. Heberden, the physician, and Hawkins, the surgeon, were ordered to visit him. Wilkes, however, by boldly refusing to admit the Parliamentary doctors into his presence, put a fresh affront upon the Government. The House, he said, had ordered them to attend him, but it had forgotten to order him to receive them. Accordingly, Ministers were about to propose more stringent measures to enforce his appearance, when, leaving his enemies to wreak their vengeance upon him in the form of outlawry and confiscation, he suddenly made
Dec. 24. good his escape to France.*

On the 20th of January, 1764, Wilkes was expelled the House of Commons with scarcely a dissentient vote; a measure which was followed up, four days afterwards, by the House of Lords voting him to be the author of the "Essay on Woman," and issuing orders for the seizure of his person. That he was not forgotten in his exile, any more than he had been in his sick chamber, is certain. For instance,

* The House of Commons evidently entertained strong doubts in regard to the serious nature of Wilkes's wound,—doubts which his, apparently easy, flight to the Continent tended to confirm. Yet it was in opposition to the remonstrances of his medical attendants that he even quitted the house. To Lord Temple he writes on the 25th December, immediately after his arrival at Calais;—"Even here I will breathe the free spirit of an Englishman. I suffered a good deal, by the rude jolting of the chaise, through the cursed town of Rochester, and through Dover;" and he adds,—"If I may talk of myself for a moment, like a true Frenchman, I should say that I am better than I feared for this poor carcase yesterday. The lips of my wound are much inflamed by the violent exercise, and I was so extremely sick in the passage, that I have strained myself greatly." *Grenville Papers*, vol. ii. p. 185.

when, fourteen months after his flight, Williams the printer was placed in the pillory for daring to re-publish Number 45 of the *North Briton*, the spectators not only presented him with two hundred guineas, which they had subscribed amongst themselves, but, after having erected a gibbet on which they suspended a boot and Scotch bonnet, carried off the delinquent in triumph in a hackney-coach correspondingly numbered, 45.*

In a despotic country like France, the arrival of so bold an enemy to courtiers and courts as Wilkes, must necessarily have excited some sensation. Madame de Pompadour once put the question to him how far he considered that a libeller in England could with impunity abuse the royal family? "Madam," he replied, "this is exactly what I am trying to find out." †

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 80. † Grose's Olio, p. 187.

CHAPTER XII.

Personal feeling of the King in Wilkes's case—Parliamentary provision for the Queen—Birth of Prince Frederick, afterwards Duke of York—Domestic life of the Royal Family—The King's kindness to Lady Molesworth's family in a season of great affliction—Simple tastes and benevolent disposition of the Queen—Marriage of Princess Augusta with the Prince of Brunswick—Coolness of the Court towards the Prince and Princess—Enthusiasm of the People—Gaming at Court prohibited—Diplomatic Duel prevented by the King.

AT the head of those who instigated the unjustifiable proceedings against Wilkes in Parliament was now, it is to be feared, the young King himself. He not only completely approved of the dismissals from the army and civil service of such members of Parliament as had voted against Government on the questions of Wilkes and General Warrants, but, in the particular instances of the removal of General Henry Conway, brother of the Earl of Hertford, from his office of Groom of the Bedchamber and the command of his regiment of Dragoons, and of Mr. Fitzherbert from his seat at the Board of Trade, he was the person who proposed and occasioned those measures being carried into execution.* To his First Minister he writes on the 18th of February, 1764:—"Firmness and resolution must now be shown, and no one's friend saved who has dared to fly off. This alone can restore order, and save this country from anarchy; by dismissing, I mean not till the question is decided; but I hope in a fortnight that those who have deserted may feel that I am not to be neglected unpunished."† It is true that the King had

* Grenville Papers, vol. ii. pp. 162, 166, 223, 229, 267, 296, 297; Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 403.

† Grenville Papers, vol. ii. pp. 267, 297, and *note*.

every reason to feel abhorrence of Wilkes, as well on account of his blasphemies and profligacies, as his being the inciter of insurrection and riot, and the cruel defamer of his mother's reputation. True also it is, that Sir Robert Walpole had formerly dismissed Lords Westmoreland and Cobham from the command of their regiments, and had deprived Pitt—"that terrible cornet of Blues," as he styled him—of his commission, on account of their opposition to the Government of the day. In those cases, however, the provocation had been much greater; nor, even if they had been precisely similar, would it have justified the King's unconstitutional attempt to influence the proceedings of Parliament, or the personal part which he took in instituting an arbitrary proscription.

In the mean time Parliament had settled 100,000*l.* a year on the Queen in the event of her surviving her consort, and the Queen had personally curtseyed her thanks to Parliament.* In addition to this magnificent dowry, Richmond Old Park and Lodge on the banks of the Thames—the retreat of Wolsey in the days of his disgrace, and afterwards the last home on English ground of the rebel Duke of Ormond—were set apart as her suburban residence in the event of a demise of the Crown. The London residence apportioned to the young Queen was the old palace of the Protector Somerset in the Strand, the same which, since the days of Anne of Denmark, had been set apart as the jointure-house of the Queens of England.† Subsequently the King exchanged it for what had been formerly the residence of the Sheffields, Dukes of Buckingham, in St. James's Park, the fair lawns and shrubberies of which bordered, in 1763, on the open country. It may be here stated, that whenever the King's private letters and notes—many of which will, from time to time, be introduced into these pages—bear the

Dec. 2, 1761.

* Annual Register for 1761, p. 182.

† Statutes at Large, vol. 8, pp. 575—7.

superscriptions of "Richmond Lodge" and the "Queen's House," they denote severally "Ormond Lodge," at Richmond, and the old red brick mansion of the Sheffields, long since demolished, which many persons will remember standing on the site of the present Buckingham Palace.* Henceforth the "Queen's House" became the favourite and constant London residence of the King and Queen. Here, during the first years after their marriage, they lived in comparative retirement; and here, on the 16th of August, 1763—in the presence, we are told, of several Lords of the Privy Council and Ladies of the Bedchamber—the Queen was delivered of her second son, Frederick, afterwards Duke of York. The letters, which next follow, announce the birth of the Prince of Wales, an event which we have already recorded.

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"L'heureux accouchement de la très chère Reine, ma Femme, qui a mis au monde un Prince hier à sept heures et demie du matin, m'ayant rempli d'une juste Joye et Satisfaction, Je n'ai pas voulu prendre du temps à vous en faire part, ne doutant pas que Votre Majesté ne prenne un intérêt sincère à cette véritable Bénédiction, qu'il a plû au Tout Puissant de repandre sur moy, et sur mes Royaumes. Je vous prie d'être assuré que vous me trouverez toujours dans la même disposition par rapport à tout ce qui peut contribuer à votre prospérité, étant avec les sentimens de la plus parfaite amitié,

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"De votre Majesté,

"le bon Frère,

"GEORGE R." †

"A ST. JAMES, *ce* 13e *Août* 1762."

* Buckingham House, which had been purchased of Sir Charles Sheffield by George 3 for the sum of 21,000*l.* was settled on Queen Charlotte in lieu of Somerset House by an Act of Parliament passed in 1775, 15 Geo. 3. c. 33. *Cunningham's Handbook of London*, Art. *Buckingham House.*

† Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6820. f. 163.

The King to the Queen of Prussia.

" Madame ma Sœur,

" Je n'ai rien de plus empressé que de vous faire part de la naissance du Prince, dont la Reine ma très chère Epouse accoucha heureusement hier matin à sept heures et demie. L'amitié que vous me portéz, ne me permet pas de douter que Votre Majesté ne s'entéresse à la Joye vive que je ressens d'un Événement aussi heureux et important, comme je vous prie d'être persuadée d'un sincère retour de ma Part pour tout ce qui pourra regarder Votre bonheur et prospérité, étant avec autant d'estime que d'affection.

" Madame ma Sœur,

" De Votre Majesté,

" le bon Frère,

" GEORGE R." *

"À ST. JAMES, *ce* 13e *Août* 1762."

The Right Hon. George Grenville to Sir Andrew Mitchell.

"ST. JAMES'S, 13th August 1762.

" Sir,

" You will see by the enclosed *Gazette* the happy News of the safe Delivery of the Queen yesterday morning; who, by the blessing of God, then brought forth a Prince, to the hearty and unfeigned joy of all His Majesty's faithful subjects, which was testified last night in these two great cities by all the demonstrations that could express their sense of such an important event.

" Her Majesty and the young Prince continue both, God be praised, in good health.

" I send you herewith the letter, by which the King is pleased to notify the birth of the Prince to the King and Queen of Prussia, with Copies, as usual.

" I cannot conclude this letter without adding my most sincere congratulations upon the great and joyful news which I have the pleasure of conveying in it to you.

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6820. f. 165.

"Two mails, which arrived yesterday, brought me your Despatch of the 21st past, which I have laid before the King, but have no particular commands at present from His Majesty upon the contents of it.

"I am, with great truth and regard,
"Sir,
"Your most obedient
"Humble servant,
"GEORGE GRENVILLE."

"*P. S.*—I have just received your letter of the 28th past." *

It was one of the misfortunes of George the Third that, in the earlier period of his reign, his true character was as little understood by his subjects in general, as it was by his Ministers. The retired life which he continued to lead was attributed partly to pride, and partly to jealousy of his youthful Queen. In like manner, the King's preference of a simple diet, and the laudable economy practised in the royal household, were construed into a niggardly penuriousness, which was undoubtedly never one of the failings of George the Third. According to the prejudiced statement of Walpole, such was the "excess of privacy and economy" in which the King and Queen passed their time at Richmond, that the beef required for their soup was restricted to four pounds, and the Queen's hairdresser waited on them when they dined.† The best answers to these and similar charges of illiberality lie in the numerous instances of unostentatious charity, and munificent support of the arts and sciences, which will be found from time to time recorded in these pages. Of the benevolence of the King's disposition it would

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6820. f. 161.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 269. Ed. 1857.

be difficult to find a more interesting example than was afforded, about this time, by his conduct to the family of the late Lady Molesworth, on their having been suddenly visited by one of the most terrible domestic calamities on record. When, on the night of the 5th of May, 1763, Lady Molesworth * retired to rest at her house in Upper Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, her family and household consisted altogether of some fifteen or sixteen persons, including six young unmarried daughters. Before daybreak eight of these persons had perished by a miserable death. Lady Molesworth was in bed with her eldest daughter, Henrietta, in a front room on the second floor, when about four o'clock in the morning she was roused from her sleep by the alarm of fire. Escape by the stairs was rendered impossible. Before any of the inmates of the house had notice of the fire they were enveloped in flames and smoke. In the agony of her fright, Miss Molesworth threw up the sash of the window, and, flinging herself towards the street, fell on the pointed iron railings beneath, and thence into the area. It was subsequently ascertained that she had fractured her leg in two places. Whether Lady Molesworth met her death from suffocation, or whether she sank with the falling floor, amongst the ruins of which her bones and ring were subsequently discovered, was never ascertained. For some seconds she was seen standing in her night-dress at the window, evidently in a dreadful state of terror and despair, and then, while in the act of lifting up her hands, she suddenly disappeared and was seen no more.† In a back room on

* Mary, daughter of the Reverend William Usher, Archdeacon of Clonfert, had married in 1743 Richard, third Viscount Molesworth, an union between a beautiful girl of nineteen and a bridegroom of sixty-three. Lord Molesworth in his youth had been aide-de-camp to the great Duke of Marlborough, whose life he saved at the battle of Ramillies at the risk of losing his own. *Coxe's Life of Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 25. He died, holding the rank of Field-Marshal, on the 12th of October 1758, leaving one son and eight daughters, of whom two of the latter were by a previous marriage.

† The fate of Lady Molesworth excited universal sympathy. Horace Walpole

the same floor slept a brother of the late Viscount, Dr. Molesworth, and his wife. The latter flung herself out of window, and happily alighted on a mattress which her husband had previously had the presence of mind to throw into the yard below. The Doctor, who was advanced in years, appears to have wanted sufficient resolution to take the leap, and accordingly, while the flames were raging within, he clung to a hook affixed to the outward wall, till, just as his strength was beginning completely to fail him, a ladder was brought by which he was enabled to effect his escape. Every apartment in the house presented a scene of distress and dismay. The second and third daughters of Lady Molesworth, Melosina and Mary, aged severally about sixteen and fifteen years, perished in the flames. In the mean time, the neighbours had spread mattresses and feather-beds on the pavement in the front of the house, at one of the upper windows of which—watched with intense interest by the crowd—appeared two younger sisters, Louisa, afterwards successively Baroness Ponsonby and Countess Fitzwilliam, and Elizabeth. "Sister," said the eldest, frightened at the height from which she had to leap, "push me and jump after me, for I have not courage to jump myself." The other did as she was bid and immediately followed her; the result being that, though they both fell upon feather-beds, the elder sister had her thigh broken, while the other escaped with some unimportant bruises. At the same time, a scene of similarly exciting interest was taking

writes to General Conway, 6 May 1763,—"The catastrophe is shocking beyond what one ever heard; and poor Lady Molesworth, whose character and conduct were the most amiable in the world, is universally lamented."—Again Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann on the 10th:—"The general compassion on this dreadful tragedy is much heightened by the very amiable character of Lady Molesworth. She had been a very great beauty, and was still a most pleasing woman, not above forty."—"I have wept," writes Countess Cowper on the 10th, "over poor Lady Molesworth and her children. What a dreadful Catastrophe! I did not visit her, but knew her and her eldest daughter very well by sight. 'Tis really too shocking: I shall be more afraid of fire than ever."—*Memoirs of Mrs. Delany*, edited by Lady Llanover, vol. i. p. 15, 2nd Series.

place at the back part of the house. In one of the rooms in the garret slept the French governess with Lady Molesworth's youngest daughter, Charlotte, a child less than eight years of age. On the alarm being given, the latter, with a presence of mind beyond her years, contrived to reach the roof of the house from the window, but finding her further progress prevented by chimneys and spikes, was compelled to make good her retreat to the apartment. There was now no chance of escape for either, but to leap from the window. The governess was the first to throw herself out and was killed on the spot. The child followed, fell on the mattress which had been thrown down by Dr. Molesworth, and fortunately escaped without having suffered any very material injuries. Some one endeavouring to assure her that her governess was safe—"Do not," she replied, "pretend to make me believe that, for I saw her dead on the pavement and her brains scattered about." A similar attempt was made to keep her in ignorance of her mother's death, but also to no purpose. Unluckily the poor child overheard some of the servants speaking of it in an adjoining apartment, and was so affected as to refuse food for two days.

In addition to these casualties, a brother of Lady Molesworth, Captain Usher, and three servants, lost their lives; one of the latter, a noble fellow, perishing in the gallant attempt to save others. Fortunately Lord Molesworth, a youth of fifteen, who had passed the preceding night in Brook Street, had on the following morning returned to Westminster School.

This terrible catastrophe, as we have already represented, excited the generous sympathies of the young King. Having learned that, with the death of Lady Molesworth, had ceased the pension which she had enjoyed as the widow of a Field Marshal, and consequently that her surviving children were left but ill provided for, the King not

only sent them a considerable sum of money for their present use, but also ordered a house to be procured for them, which he took a pleasure in furnishing at his own expense. Moreover, not satisfied with securing to them the same amount of pension as had been enjoyed by their late mother, he increased it by an additional 200*l.* a year.

With reference to the fate of the survivors of this painful tragedy, the story of the eldest—who, it will be remembered, had fractured her leg in two places—alone possesses any remarkable interest. The adjoining house, into which she was received, happened to be that of Lady Grosvenor, whose son, Lord Grosvenor, was supposed to have formed an attachment for the young lady. Lord Grosvenor having been informed that a fire was raging in Upper Brook Street, had lost no time in hurrying to his mother's residence, which he reached just as the mutilated girl was being carried into the hall. She partially recognised him, and prayed him to take care of her. A surgeon was sent for, who, on his arrival, found her insensible, and while she was in this state deemed it expedient to amputate her leg. For some weeks, she continued in so precarious a condition that it was found necessary to deceive her, not only in respect to the fate of her mother and sisters, but also to conceal from her, if possible, the fact of the operation which she had undergone. With this object, a false leg of bandaged pasteboard was attached to the remains of the severed limb; a device which fortunately answered the purpose intended. Once only, a little sister, who was permitted to approach her bedside, very nearly allowed the truth to escape. "Oh, poor Harriet!" she exclaimed, "they tell me your leg is cut off." But even this blunt announcement of the fact failed to undeceive the invalid. "No," she replied, "it is not." The truth, however, could not always be kept a secret, and accordingly it was at length broke to

her by an affectionate female relative, in a manner equally ingenious and delicate. Having by degrees taught her to believe that the wound was getting worse, and that amputation might probably be necessary, she was at last brought to express a wish that the operation was over. Some natural tears followed the announcement; but her predominant feelings were those of gratitude and satisfaction. "Thank God!" she said, "it is not my arm, for now I can still amuse myself."

During these days of pain and sadness, Lord Grosvenor not only behaved with the greatest kindness and attention towards his mother's guest, but, it is said, placed in the hands of her guardian a considerable sum of money for her use; at the same time insisting that she should never be informed of the source whence it was derived. Here, however, his attentions ended. The following year, he gave his hand to a daughter of the house of Vernon, whose name also happened to be Henrietta. For some time, disappointment and misfortune seem to have pursued Miss Molesworth. She was riding, a year or two afterwards, with a young nobleman to whom she was engaged to be married, when to her horror she beheld him thrown from his horse and killed on the spot. She subsequently, in 1774, married the Right Honourable John Staples, grandson of Sir Robert Staples, Baronet, by whom she became the mother of several children.*

Having had occasion to attract attention to the better qualities of George the Third, it is but right that similar justice should be done to his consort. Virtuous, prudent, amiable, and unostentatiously pious, her pure example went far to effect that amendment in public morals, and especially in the tone of high society, for which even her

* The foregoing details are derived for the most part from *Walpole's Letters*, vol. iv. pp. 77—80. M. Duten's *Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement*, vol. ii. pp. 24—33; *Annual Register for* 1763, p. 75.

maligners have given her the highest credit. "You do not know the character of the Queen;"—writes Lord Chesterfield to his son;—"Here it is. She is a good woman, a good wife, a tender mother, and an unmeddling Queen. The King loves her as a woman, but, I verily believe, has never yet spoken one word to her about business." * In acts of charity and benevolence, the Queen followed in the footsteps of her husband. In the course of the year 1763, we find her purchasing a house and grounds in Bedfordshire, which she subsequently endowed as an asylum for the daughters of decayed gentlemen; nor let it be forgotten that she was not only a subscriber to the Magdalen Hospital; but, overcoming the prejudices which many of her sex had conceived against that asylum for female frailty, nobly consented to become its patroness.

Devoted to the King, and formed for the enjoyment of domestic life, the Queen had readily fallen into the habits which were most congenial to him. With almost incredulous eyes, the young and the gay beheld a fair and youthful Queen preferring simplicity to splendour, and retirement to a round of vanity and pleasure. With the exception of a taste for dancing, with which she always indulged herself at her entertainments, all her amusements as well as her pursuits were of a domestic character. In the morning she occupied herself with needlework and reading; later in the day she either rode or walked with the King, and in the evening either played a game of cards with him or sang to her own accompaniment upon the harpsichord. Much of her time, too, in the early days of her marriage, was passed in learning the English language, which she not only mastered so as to enable her to speak it with fluency and correctness, but also to write it with elegance. Her instructor was the Reverend Doctor Majendie, father of

* Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 400.

the late Bishop of Chester, the King himself frequently assisting at her studies.

In another respect the Queen differed materially from the majority of her sex. Many years afterwards she assured Miss Burney that, not even in her earliest days, had jewels or dress had any fascination for her. She admitted, indeed, that for the first week or fortnight after she had become a Queen, the adornment of her person had not been an unpleasing task; but at that time, she added, she was only seventeen, and besides it was not her reason but only her eyes which were dazzled. "She told me, with the sweetest grace imaginable," writes Miss Burney, "how well she had liked at first her jewels and ornaments as Queen; 'but how soon,' she cried, 'was that over! Believe me, Miss Burney, it is a pleasure of a week—a fortnight at most—and to return no more. I thought, at first, I should always choose to wear them; but from the fatigue and trouble of putting them on, and the care they required, and the fear of losing them, believe me, in a fortnight's time I longed again for my own earlier dress, and wished never to see them more!'" *

Of the numerous brothers and sisters of George the Third the eldest was the Princess Augusta, who on the 31st of July 1763 had completed her twenty-sixth year. Her manners were lively and engaging; her complexion beautiful. In childhood her loveliness had been remarkable, but before she attained to womanhood its bloom had passed away. "Lady Augusta," writes Horace Walpole, "was not handsome, but tall enough and not ill-made, with the German whiteness of hair and complexion so remarkable in the Royal Family, and with their precipitate, yet thick Westphalian accent." † The ruling defect of the Princess was a love of meddling in politics, in which her

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. i. pp. 202—3.
† Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 347.

opinions diametrically differed from those of her mother. While Bute, on the one hand, was the idol of the Princess Dowager, the younger Princess, on her part, not only lavished all her admiration upon Pitt, but, like her brother the Duke of York, boldly and openly inveighed against the policy of the Court. So ardent a politician was likely to set a troublesome example to her younger brothers and sisters; nay the Queen herself, it was feared, might possibly be infected with the zeal of her sister-in-law. Under these circumstances, the Princess Dowager resolved to look out for a foreign husband for her daughter, and thus remove her to a distance from the scene of her present political vagaries.*

The Prince whom the British Court fixed upon as the most eligible consort for the Princess Augusta, was Charles William Ferdinand, Hereditary Prince of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, a favourite nephew, and pupil in the art of War, of Frederick the Great of Prussia. Though only in his twenty-ninth year, he had long since earned for himself a considerable military reputation at the battle of Hastenbeck, which more recently he had improved by the courage and ability displayed by him at the siege of Crefeld. His manners were remarkably prepossessing; his figure slight and graceful; his countenance, which wore a weather-worn and soldier-like look, was remarkably handsome. This is the same Duke of Brunswick who, forty-three years afterwards, died of the wounds which he received at the battle of Jena, and the father of the no less gallant Duke Frederick William, who lost his life at the battle of Quatre-Bras.

The hereditary Prince landed in England on the 12th of January 1764. A marriage-portion of 80,000*l.*, an annuity of 5000*l.*—with which the Irish Revenue was made

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 346, 347.

chargeable—and another of 3000*l.*, derived from Hanover,* certainly held out no trifling inducements for a German Prince to visit England. The Prince, who, up to the time of his arrival at St. James's, had not even seen a portrait of his betrothed, expressed himself highly charmed with her person on his being introduced to her. Had it been otherwise, he observed, he should certainly have returned to Brunswick without a wife.† The Princess, on her part, seems to have been equally well satisfied with her future husband.

Interesting as was the occasion of the Prince's visit to England, and notwithstanding his being a stranger in the land, he was treated by the English Court with a coldness and neglect, which could scarcely fail to attract the attention of the public. The Prince, it seems, had been for some time past in the habit of making use of very imprudent language in discussing English politics. More especially his enthusiastic encomiums on the character and liberal principles of Pitt, are said to have given offence at St. James's. At all events, whatever grounds for complaint his conduct may have afforded, the King was evidently resolved to render his visit to England as brief, if not as uncomfortable to him, as possible. According to Walpole, almost every precedent of ceremony, which should have done him honour, was omitted. The custom for the servants of the King and Queen to appear in new clothes at a royal wedding was dispensed with; no sentinel was placed at the entrance of the royal apartments which he occupied in Somerset House; no guest sat at his table except with the cognisance of the King, and at the formal invitation of the Lord Steward.

If, however, the Prince met but with a churlish reception from his new connexions, very different was the welcome accorded him by the people of England. His reputation as

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 347.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 164. Ed. 1857.

a gallant soldier had preceded his arrival; while the further fact of his approaching nuptials with a Princess of England invested him with an additional interest. At Harwich, where he landed, the town was in an uproar. "Mrs. Boscawen tells me," writes Lady Chatham to her husband, "they almost pulled down the house in which he was, in order to see him." At Chelmsford, where he rested a short time, an incident occurred which seems to have flattered and amused him extremely. A Quaker so pertinaciously insisted upon being admitted to his presence, that at last his request was complied with. Taking off his hat—for the first time perhaps in his life to any one but his Maker—"Noble friend," he said, "give me thy hand: although I do not fight myself, I love a brave man that will fight. Thou art a valiant prince, and art to be married to a lovely princess: love her, make her a good husband, and the Lord bless you both!" * The next morning, observing in the crowd a soldier in the uniform of Elliot's Light-Horse, a regiment with which he had formerly served in action, the Prince kissed his hand to the man. Every eye of course became fixed upon the soldier, who at once became a person of importance. "What!" exclaimed the crowd, "does he know you?"—"Yes," replied the man, "he once led me into a scrape, which nobody but himself could have brought me out of again."—"You may guess," writes Walpole, who relates the anecdote, "how much this added to the Prince's popularity, which was at high-water mark before." †

Naturally indignant at the treatment he met with from the Court, the Prince retaliated by seeking the society of the leaders of the Opposition; this being the very object which the King and the Princess Dowager were chiefly anxious to prevent. Twice he dined with the Duke of

* Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 271; Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 164.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 164.

Cumberland, who was at this time on the worst terms with the King; and, moreover, he not only paid marked attention to the Duke of Newcastle, who was equally out of favour at Court, but arranged that the chiefs of the Opposition should assemble and be presented to him at Newcastle House. Accordingly, on the appointed day, about twenty persons of high rank paid their respects to him in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and at his departure attended him without their hats in the rain to his coach.*

But the circumstance, which more than any other was calculated to give offence to the Court, was a visit of respect paid by the Prince to Mr. Pitt, at his country seat at Hayes. Of this fact, notwithstanding that it was confidently denied in the newspapers of the day, there exists not the shadow of a doubt. He proceeded thither, it appears, in a hired post-chaise, accompanied only by his chief secretary, M. de Feronce, and two servants. For some reason or other he directed the driver to pull up his horses short of their destination, when, having opened the door of the chaise himself and alighted, he proceeded on foot to the great man's residence, where he was closeted with him for about two hours.†

The marriage of the Duke of Brunswick and the Princess Augusta took place in the great Council Chamber in St. James's Palace on the 16th of January 1764, attended, apparently, with but little splendour. Thirty years afterwards, the Princess told Lord Malmesbury at Brunswick that the only diamonds which she had carried with her out of England were a fine one set in a ring, given her as a *bague de mariage* by the King her brother, and a pair of diamond bracelets. The Queen, she insisted, was extremely jealous of the former gift.‡

* Mrs. Carter's Letters, vol. iii. p. 88.

† Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 271; Mrs. Carter's Letters, vol. iii. p. 88; Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 348; Annual Register for 1764, p. 46.

‡ Lord Malmesbury's Diaries, vol. iii. p. 155, 2nd Edition.

The fact, which had now become notorious, that the Prince, like his bride, was violently opposed to the politics of the Court, rendered the new-married couple more popular, if possible, than they had previously been. When, two days after the marriage, the royal family attended the performances at Covent Garden Theatre, the King and Queen took their places amidst a sullen silence, whilst the appearance in the theatre of the Prince and Princess was the signal for more than one round of rapturous applause. "The shouts, claps, and huzzas to the Prince," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, "were immoderate. He sat behind his Princess and her brothers. The galleries called him to come forward. In the middle of the play he went to be elected a member of the Royal Society and returned to the Theatre, when the applause was renewed."* —"The acclamations of the theatre at the appearance of the Prince of Brunswick," writes James Grenville to Lady Chatham, "exceeded anything that ever happened."† Again, when on the following Saturday the royal family attended the Opera, the House was no less crowded, and the reception of the Prince no less enthusiastic. "The crowd," writes Walpole, "is not to be described. The Duchess of Leeds, Lady Denbigh, Lady Scarborough, and others, sat on chairs between the scenes. The doors of the front boxes were thrown open, and the passages were all filled to the back of the stoves; nay, women of fashion stood on the very stairs till eight at night."‡

One might have supposed that the Hereditary Prince, satisfied with these triumphs, would have refrained from seeking to humiliate his royal brother-in-law, in a still more painful manner, in the eyes of his subjects. Whether, however, angry feelings got the better of his sounder

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 166.
† Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 277.
‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 170.

judgment—whether his head had been turned by the homage and plaudits of the vulgar—or whether he was eager to ingratiate himself with the Chiefs of the Opposition—it appears to be certain that, at least on two different occasions, he put affronts on the King of England which no treatment he had met with could possibly justify. Both these occasions are recorded by Walpole. "The Duke," he writes, "has dined twice with the Duke of Cumberland; the first time on Friday last when he was appointed to be at St. James's at *half an hour after seven* to a concert. As the time drew near, de Feronce pulled out his watch. The Duke took the hint and said,—'I am sorry to part with you, but I fear your time is come.' He replied,—*N'importe;* sat on, drank coffee, and it was *half an hour after eight* before he set out from Upper Grosvenor Street for St. James's." * The other occasion, which took place on the Saturday evening that the royal family attended the opera, savours so much of vulgarity, if not vindictiveness, that we would willingly entertain a hope that it was unintentional. "In the middle of the Second Act," writes Walpole, "the Hereditary Prince, who sat with his wife and her brothers in their box, got up, *turned his back* to King and Queen, pretending to offer his place to Lady Tankerville and then to Lady Susan. You know enough of Germans and their stiffness to etiquette, to be sure that this could not be done inadvertently." † The fact is, that the King and the Prince were both to blame. If little excuse is to be found for the King's churlish treatment of his intended brother-in-law, still less justifiable was the Prince's impertinent interference with the party-politics of a country in which he was a stranger, and his daring to insult a King of England in the midst of his own subjects. But still more reprehensible than the conduct either of the

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 170.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 170; Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 348.

King or the Duke was that of the great Whig Lords, both in aiding and abetting the Prince in his hostility to the Court, and in converting his ephemeral popularity into political capital. The latter object, as far as party purposes were concerned, could avail them little, while on the other hand it was calculated, as they must have been well aware, to inflict a painful amount of annoyance and mortification upon their Sovereign.

In the mean time the Duke of Brunswick, gratified by the cheers of the multitude, and by the court paid to him by the great Opposition Families, would willingly have prolonged his stay in a country in which popularity was so easily achieved, and royal merit so immediately discovered. The King however, as we have seen, had ample reasons for desiring the absence of his sister and brother-in-law, and accordingly it was resolved to fix them to the day which had been originally named for their departure. That day, the 26th of January, was a gloomy one and the weather tempestuous, yet when the carriage, containing the bride and bridegroom, emerged from the gateway of St. James's Palace, a crowd of kind faces had assembled to smile farewell on them, while prayers and blessings accompanied them on their route to the Coast. That night they slept at Witham, Lord Abercorn's seat in Essex, the same mansion which had entertained Queen Charlotte on her first arrival from Mecklenburg. Their quarters would seem to have been most uncomfortable. On the 3rd of February Mrs. Carter writes to her friend Miss Talbot;—"Very pathetic are the lamentations made over the Prince and Princess and their distresses on the road to Harwich. It seems Lord Abercorn had desired the honour of entertaining them, but nothing was accepted but his house. Care was to be taken of all the rest. Such care was taken that when the Princess arrived at midnight at Witham, as dark and as cold and as hungry belike as a Princess might be,

they found neither candle, nor fire, nor food."* At supper the Princess looked so woe-begone as to attract the attention of her husband. *Eh qu'avez vous donc ma chère Princesse? Est-ce que vous manquez vos gardes? Nous sommes tous égaux ici. Mais consolez-vous; quand vous serez à Brunswick vous en aurez.*" The Princess, it is said, smiled and soon recovered her cheerfulness.† The discomforts which the royal couple had to put up with were doubtless much exaggerated by what Mrs. Carter styles "Minority invention." As a matter of course, they were ascribed to private instructions deliberately issued by the Court.

The yacht which carried the Prince and Princess from Harwich set sail in inclement weather, and before long was Jan. 29. overtaken by a tempest. From the end of January till nearly the middle of February no tidings of them reached London, and consequently the most lively apprehensions began to be entertained for their safety. Party malice attributed their peril to the Court having driven them away at such a season; and accordingly when, on the 7th, rumours reached London that the yacht had foundered on the Coast of Holland, the indignation of the public was exceeded only by its lamentations. "The basket-women in St. James's Market," writes Mrs. Carter on the 9th,—"have been most intemperately vociferous in their wishes that all who sent the Prince and Princess away in such weather were in their places." The Opposition as usual made the most of the popular clamour. "Various and ingenious," continues Mrs. Carter, "have been the political inventions of every day. The Minority, to have a fair pretence of hanging the Ministry, have sunk the yacht and drowned the Prince and Princess."‡ That there had been real danger, however, was unquestionable. Horace Walpole

* Mrs. Carter's Letters, vol. iii. p. 88.
† *Ibid.*, p. 91. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

writes to Lord Hertford on the 7th;—"I tremble while I continue my letter, having just heard such a dreadful story. A captain of a vessel has made oath before the Lord Mayor this morning that he saw one of the yachts sink on the Coast of Holland; and it is believed to be the one in which the Prince was. The City is in an uproar; nor need one point out all such an accident may produce, if true, which I most fervently hope it is not." * Fierce, however, as had been the tempest, the yacht which carried the Prince and Princess escaped uninjured, and safely landed them at Helvoetsluys in Holland.†

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"Les sentimens de votre Majesté pour tout ce qui regarde les intérêts de ma Maison, me sont trop bien connus, pour douter un moment de la part qu' Elle prendra à l'heureux accomplissement du mariage, qui vient d'être célébré, entre ma très chère sœur La Princesse Auguste, et mon cousin Le Prince Héréditaire de Brunswick-Luneburg. Votre Majesté me fera la justice de considérer mon empressement à Lui communiquer cet événement, comme une nouvelle preuve de l'estime et de l'amitié invariables, avec lesquelles Je suis,

"Monsieur mon Frère,
"De votre Majesté
"le bon Frère
"GEORGE R."‡

"ST. JAMES'S, *ce 17e Janvier* 1764."

The King to the Queen of Prussia.

"Madame ma Sœur,

"Je m'empresse de faire part à votre Majesté de l'heureux accomplissement du mariage entre ma très chère Sœur La Princesse Auguste, et mon cousin Le Prince Héréditaire de Bruns-

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 181.
† Annual Register for 1764, pp. 45—6, 52.
‡ Brit. Mus. Addit. MS. 6821. f. 111.

wick-Luneburg, dont la célébration s'est faite Hier, et je me persuade que votre Majesté apprendra, avec une vraie satisfaction, la nouvelle d'un Événement si intéressant pour les Illustres Personnes, qui lui appartiennent de si près. Je saisis avec plaisir cette nouvelle occasion de réitérer à votre Majesté tous les Sentimens de l'amitié cordiale, avec laquelle, Je suis,

"Madame ma Sœur,
"De votre Majesté
"le bon Frère,
"GEORGE R."*

"A ST. JAMES's ce 17e *Janvier* 1764."

It was at Christmas this year, that the immemorial custom of playing at Hazard at Court on Twelfth Night was, by the King's orders, for the first time discontinued. This ruinous game, it seems, used formerly to be played indiscriminately throughout the palace; large sums having been lost or won, either by, or else in the presence of the sovereign.† Card-playing was in the first instance substituted for the dice-box; but the evil of high play was found to continue notwithstanding the change of pastime, and accordingly the King issued a subsequent order, that for the future, no gaming whatever should under any circumstances be allowed in the royal palaces.

The following account of a fracas which took place at Court somewhat early in the reign of George the Third, reads rather like a passage from the pages of one of the Tudor Chroniclers than an event of modern times. "I think it necessary," writes Lord Rochfort to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "to acquaint your Excellency of a disagreeable affair which passed at the ball at Court on the 5th instant,‡ and which you will no doubt have heard of through other

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6821. f. 113.

† More than one hundred and thirty years previously, (9 January 1633,) a correspondent writes to the Earl of Strafford—"I had almost forgot to tell your Lordship that the dicing-night [Twelfth Night] the King [Charles 1] carried away in James Palmer's hat £1850. The Queen was his half and brought him that luck; she shared presently £900." *Strafford Letters*, vol. i. p. 207.

‡ 5 June 1769, Lord Rochfort's letter is dated the 13th.

channels. The Russian Ambassador [Count Czernicheff] coming in first, placed himself on the bench next the ladies. The Imperial Ambassador [Count Seilern] coming in soon after, Count Czernicheff very politely gave him the upper hand. Some time afterwards the French Ambassador, coming in, stood before the Envoys' bench behind the Ambassadors. Count Czernicheff, turning round, entered into conversation with him, when, on a sudden, the French Ambassador [the Count du Châtelet] * stepped over the bench and pushed himself in with some violence between the Imperial and Russian Ambassadors. Some very warm words passed between Count Czernicheff and the French Ambassador. The former particularly treated him as an *Impertinent*. The Spanish Ambassador then coming in, and settling himself quietly amongst the ladies, Count Châtelet beckoned to him to come and place himself next the Imperial Ambassador, on which the Russian Ambassador got up and seated himself between Madame Maltzan and Madame Very. At going away, some warm words again passed, and the Russian Ambassador following Count Châtelet, more high words ensued upon the staircase, and they both went together in the Russian Ambassador's coach." †

The result of the two Ambassadors seating themselves together in the same coach was such as may perhaps have been anticipated. "Du Châtelet," writes Walpole, "proposed that they should decide the quarrel with their swords, and they endeavoured to go into St. James's Park, but the gates were closed." ‡ Accordingly they agreed to defer the encounter till the following morning, when it was happily

* "Du Châtelet," writes Walpole, "was enough disposed to assume any airs of superiority. At Vienna, on a former occasion, he had embroiled his Court with the Imperial by wrong-headed insolence." *Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3*, vol. iii. p. 368.

† Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. pp. 519, 520.

‡ Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 369.

prevented by the prompt interference of the young King. "The King," continues Lord Rochfort, "out of his great tenderness and humanity, ordered Lord Weymouth and myself to wait on the French and Russian Ambassadors to prevent any mischief, which was accordingly done. On Tuesday morning Count Châtelet made a visit to the Russian Ambassador, and said how sorry he was such an affair had happened. The Russian Ambassador appears personally satisfied with the excuses made for the personal incivility, but considers his Court as highly insulted." In consequence of this stupid and bullying affair, the Lord Chamberlain, by the King's orders, intimated to the different foreign Ambassadors that, on future occasions of Balls at Court, it was his desire that the practice of claiming precedency should be dispensed with.*

The King not only took a deep and unceasing interest in the prosperity of his subjects in general, but the welfare of the very meanest of them was not indifferent to him. There is extant, for instance, among the Mitchell MSS. in the British Museum, a letter superscribed,—"For his Prescent Mayjesty King George y^e^ third, London," in which the writer, an English sailor, states that in the month of May 1766, while enjoying himself on shore near Memel, he was kidnapped and enlisted against his will into the Prussian military service. Four times over, he informs the King, he has represented his hard case to "his Mayjisty King of Prows in Berlien," but no notice having been taken of his letters, he now, by the advice of "a verry honorowble ould gentleman, a marchant from Ingland," ventures to address "tow or three lines" to his own Sovereign. "This letter," the writer concludes, "imust smugle away in toan inglishmans hands that none of the Offiscears catsh me with this

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 521, 2nd Series.

letter. iam 28 years of agge and 5 foot aleaven in hight, and so no more at prescent, but remain, in prays to the Allmighty for your Mayjesty's long rean, and in peace with all men.

"JAMES RICHARDSON."

"From the revow in camps
"in Cenesbourgh May the 31th 1767." *

Long as is the letter, from which the foregoing is an extract, and difficult as it is to read from the badness of the writing as well as of the spelling, the King nevertheless not only took the trouble to decipher it, but ordered an immediate investigation into the truth of the statements which it contained. "His Majesty," writes one of his Secretaries of State, General Conway, to the British Ambassador at Berlin, "has received a letter by the Post from one James Richardson, an English Sailor, who, above a twelvemonth ago was, partly by force and partly by terror, enlisted in the Prussian Service. As the King's disposition inclines him to lend an ear to the complaints of the meanest of his subjects, he perused this letter with attention; and finding in it a remarkable air of truth and sincerity, he directed me to transmit it to you, that you may inquire concerning its grounds and foundation. If the poor man's narrative be found conformable to fact, and if he be enlisted otherwise than from his free choice, it is his Majesty's pleasure that you make application in his behalf to the King of Prussia, and recover him his liberty." The man's story proved to be correct, and accordingly, within six weeks from the date of General Conway's letter, he obtained his discharge.† The following is a copy of Richardson's Certificate of his release :—

* Mitchell Papers, vol. xx. fol. 223; Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. pp. 509—512, 2nd Series.

† Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. pp. 507—8, 2nd Series.

"This is to sertify that I James Richardson hath got my discharge from lallenboun ridgiment on foot, and hath got one dallar to bear my expences on my way, and a pass, and make the best of my way to owld ingland.

"Rassllinbourg September 18th 1767."*

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 512.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Colonial Stamp Act—Strenuously opposed by the North American Colonists—Passed with little discussion—Manifestations of the King's mental malady—Intrigues to exclude the name of the King's Mother from the Regency Bill—Her name inserted.

In the mean time, Grenville had been intent upon that most important and indefensible measure of his Administration,—the imposition of his famous Stamp Act on the North American Colonies. At the time when the short-sighted Minister was employed with his clerks at the Treasury in arranging his forthcoming Budget, how little could he have anticipated the long and bloody war which his financial policy was destined to entail upon his country! How little could he have imagined that there was one schedule in that Budget which was doomed to effect a Revolution unparalleled in importance in the annals of the human race—that he was lighting up a conflagration which ere long was to blaze from the Hudson to the Mississippi, and the sparks of which, descending upon the thrones of the Old World, were destined to accelerate the great Revolution in France, and to induce those terrible proscriptions, massacres, and wars, which disgraced the cause of freedom at its birth! How little could he have foreseen that from his shortsightedness would spring up that spirit of freedom which was destined to produce a Washington and a Franklin in the New World, and which sent back Lafayette as the apostle of Liberty to the Old! Still less could he have imagined that his petti-fogging policy was about to give birth to a mighty and

rival empire—not an empire feebly struggling into existence—but at once springing forth, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, armed with the wisdom and thunders of her sire, and destined to bear her giant part in extending over the greater portion of the Globe the language, the industry, and indomitable energy of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Such claims on the part of the mother-country, as those set forth by Grenville—namely that she had not only a prescriptive right to tax her Colonies, but that she was justified in appropriating the revenue so raised to her own purposes, and for her own benefit—were certainly not those to which a free and gallant people like the Americans could be expected to submit without a struggle. Grenville, however, who was as devoid of fear as he was of foresight, could perceive no obstacle to the success of his daring and favourite policy. Very different had been the convictions of Sir Robert Walpole, when the project of taxing America had formerly been suggested to that sagacious Minister. "No!" he said, "it is too hazardous a measure for me; I shall leave it to my successors." Again, when Lord Chesterfield discussed the subject with him, he replied—"I have Old England against me, and do you think I will have New England likewise?" * Grenville, on the contrary, could discover no direct enactment in the Statute Book against American Taxation, and he looked little further. It must be admitted, indeed, as some excuse for Grenville, that the amount of sovereign authority which Great Britain had a constitutional right to exercise over her Colonies, had as yet never been clearly defined. To what extent, the prerogative of the Crown, the powers vested in Parliament, and the jurisdiction of the Law Courts, authorized them severally to interfere with, or control the affairs of the Colonists, had

* Coxe's Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. i. p. 753.

hitherto involved a problem which, till Grenville took upon himself to sever the Gordian knot, no British Minister had had the hardihood to attempt to solve. Moderation in the dealings which Great Britain had carried on with her Colonies, and a desire to render their national interests identical, had up to this time been the prudent policy of former Governments. Of past neglect, indeed, of their affairs, the Americans had a right to complain; but, to use the words of Burke, it had sometimes proved a "salutary neglect." When the Duke of Newcastle quitted office as Secretary of State, it was found that he had left behind him a closet full of unopened American despatches;* while of Grenville it was said, that he lost America by reading them.†

It was late in the night of the 10th of March 1764, in a thin House of Commons and just as it was on the point of rising, that Grenville introduced his memorable plan for imposing Stamp Duties on the American People. Although it amounted in the first instance to little more than a proposition, still it was quite sufficient to arouse the natural fears and indignation of the Colonists. The bare fact of its being designated by Grenville an "experiment towards further aid," ‡ manifested to what doubtful and intolerable lengths such an innovation might hereafter be carried. The Americans at once perceived the vast importance of the precedent which was sought to be established. They were satisfied that justice was on their side. They felt that the question admitted of no compromise with the mother-country, and that now or never was the time for action, for if the principle of right were once to be conceded by them, future resistance might be rendered utterly unavailing. Accordingly, in their numerous memorials and

* Walpoliana, p. 70.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 69; note by Sir Denis Le Marchant.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 71.

petitions, they urgently inveighed against Grenville's measure, both as a grievous and unsupportable innovation, and as diametrically opposed to the spirit, if not to the letter of the Constitution. They were notoriously, they said, without representatives in the British Parliament, and it was a fundamental principle of the British Constitution, that taxation and representation were inseparable. What concern had they, they asked, in the continental squabbles of Europe? If the sovereigns of England chose to embark in costly wars on account of their German Electorate, why should they, the inhabitants of the far West, be called upon to pay their share of the expenses? Hitherto, as they reminded the mother-country, their loyalty to their Sovereign had never been disputed. In former wars, whenever the interests of the two countries had been identical, they had never failed to contribute, to the utmost of their ability, to the public Exchequer. Even now, they added, they were ready, at the receipt of a constitutional requisition, to furnish, as a voluntary offering, appliances which otherwise no force should ever wring from them. Unhappily, not only were these arguments and protests entirely thrown away upon the impracticable Grenville, but the earnest petitions of the different Provincial Assemblies were not unfrequently either stifled or ignored. For instance, memorials from the important provinces of Massachusetts and New York, though ordered by the King in Council to be laid before Parliament, were actually suppressed.* At all events, Grenville

* This almost incredible circumstance was doubted at first by the author; but on examining the MS. books of the Privy Council Office he discovered, under date 14 December 1764, the order for the memorials in question to be placed before Parliament; whereas he has in vain searched the Journals of the Houses of Lords and Commons for any evidence of the King's commands having been obeyed. "Dutiful petitions"—was one of the complaints of the Americans at a later period—"have been preferred to our most gracious Sovereign, which, to the great consternation of the people, we now learn have been cruelly and insidiously prevented from reaching the royal presence." *Documents relating to the Dispute between Great Britain and America, prior to* 1776, pp. 5, 263. Burke, too, in his famous "Speech on American

carried his point. Early in the month of February 1765 he formally introduced his fatal Stamp Duty Bill into the House of Commons, and on the 22nd of March it received the royal assent.

Considering the vast importance of this celebrated measure, the little attention which it provoked at the time, both in and out of Parliament, becomes matter of interest as well as surprise. In vain we search through the ample contemporaneous correspondence of Horace Walpole for any evidence to the contrary. Although his letters, both to the Earl of Hertford and Sir Horace Mann, profess, to use his own words, to give an "account of our chief debates,"* yet they contain but one allusion, and that an unimportant one, to the American Stamp Act. Walpole himself subsequently admits that it was a question which, at the time, was "little understood and less attended to."† Colonel Barré
Feb. 7. alone, in a most eloquent speech, vehemently raised his voice against the fatal proposition. "Children planted by *your* care!" were among his words—"No! your oppressions planted them in America: they fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated and inhospitable country. They nourished by *your* indulgence! They grew by your neglect of them. They protected by *your* arms! They have nobly taken up arms in your defence."‡ Yet Burke could scarcely have been very far in the wrong, when, nine years afterwards, he stated in the House of Commons that he

Taxation," thus speaks of the fate of the Massachusetts and New York memorials—"They were suppressed; they were put under the table, notwithstanding an Order of Council to the contrary, by the Ministry which composed the very Council that made the order." *Burke's Works*, vol. i. p. 165. Edition 1841.

* Letters, vol. iv. p. 322. Edition 1840.

† Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 68.

‡ The authenticity of this memorable protest against American taxation appears to be doubted both by Mr. Adolphus (*Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 165, 4th Ed.) and by Lord Stanhope (*Hist. of England*, vol. v., p. 181). See, however, *Ingersoll's Letters*, pp. 14—17, quoted in the *North American Review for July* 1852, and "*Documents, Prior to* 1776, *relating to the Dispute between Great Britain and America*," p. 5.

never remembered "a more languid debate" within its walls, than that which provoked the dismemberment of the empire. Only three or four members, he reminded the House, had spoken against taxing the Colonies; nor had the minority exceeded thirty-nine or forty. "In the House of Lords," added Burke, "I do not recollect that there was any debate or division at all."* The fact is, that the great mass of the people of England troubled themselves very little about the matter; while within the walls of Parliament, a measure that promised to shift the cost of the late war from the shoulders of the taxpayers of Great Britain to those of the unrepresented Colonists, was pretty certain to meet with favour.

Attempts have from time to time been made to transfer from Grenville to others, the odium of having originated the fatal Stamp Act. When, a few years after his death, Charles Jenkinson, afterwards first Earl of Liverpool, stood up in the House of Commons and manfully battled the question on behalf of his former patron and friend, there were those present who believed that Jenkinson himself was the real culprit, and that Grenville had been prevailed upon by him to carry the project into law. There were three other persons also on whom it has been attempted to fix this unenviable honour—the one, Grenville's colleague Lord Halifax; the second, one Huske an American,† and the third an individual whose identity it has been found impossible to establish. Among the Grenville Papers was discovered a remarkable letter—dated Turnham Green July 5 1763—in which the writer not only proposes to George Grenville to impose "a Stamp Duty on vellum and paper in America," but actually encloses the draughts of two Bills for carrying the proposition

* Speech on American Taxation, 19 April 1774; Burke's Works, vol. i. p. 169.
† Gordon's History of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 157.

into operation. These documents are in the ordinary handwriting of a clerk; the signature only of the projector, one "Henry McCulloh," being in original—a signature, by the way, tremulously ominous of the awful consequences of the policy which it advocated.* But, after all, whether the idea of imposing a Stamp Act upon America originated in Grenville himself, or whether it was suggested to him by others, is a question of very secondary importance. Grenville unquestionably it was, who first introduced the project to the consideration of Parliament; he it was who, after having devoted twelve months to the deliberate investigation of the merits of this most momentous question, had urged the Parliament of Great Britain to adopt it as law; and, lastly, he it was who, to the close of his existence, persisted in defending it as a sagacious and salutary policy. If Grenville, then, was not the author of the Stamp Act, in what other quarter are we to search for the real projector? †

On the 12th of January 1765 the King was seized with an alarming illness, which, as will be seen by the following extracts from Mr. Grenville's Diary, lasted till the beginning of April.

"*Sunday, January 13th.*—Sir William Duncan ‡ came to let Mr. Grenville know that he had been with the

* Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 374, *note.*

† The King himself has been more than once named as the person who suggested to Grenville the taxation of America. See *May's Constitutional History*, vol. i. p. 24, and *Buckle's History of Civilization*, vol. i. pp. 435—6, *note.* Neither of these accomplished writers, however, would appear to have any higher authority for what they advance than a statement of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall's (*Hist. Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 111—2, 3rd edition), whose testimony, unless when corroborated by other evidence, is notoriously open to suspicion. Mr. Buckle indeed refers also to Nicholls's Recollections (vol. i. pp. 205, 386); but on turning to Nicholls's pages we find the question treated by him merely as a "matter of doubt"; indeed Mr. Buckle himself scarcely professes to do more.

‡ William Duncan, M.D., one of the King's physicians, married, 5 September 1763, Lady Mary Tufton, daughter of Sackville seventh Earl of Thanet, a connexion which probably was the occasion of his being created a baronet on the 9th of August following. Lady Mary was born in 1723. "I must tell you," writes Walpole to

King, who had a violent cold, had passed a restless night, and complained of stitches in his breast. His Majesty was blooded 14 ounces."

"*Monday*, 14*th.*—The King is better, but saw none of his Ministers."

"*Tuesday*, 15*th.*—Mr. Grenville went to the King, and found him perfectly cheerful and good-humoured, and full of conversation."

"*Monday*, *Feb.* 25*th.*—The King was blooded, and kept his bed with a feverish cold. Mr. Grenville was confined at the same time."

"*Sunday*, *March* 3*rd.*—The King had a good night, but waked in the morning with a return of fever and pain upon his breast; he was blooded in the foot."

"*Tuesday*, *March* 5*th.*—The King sees nobody whatever, not even his brothers. Lord Bute saw him on Monday for a quarter of an hour, for the first time, though he [Lord Bute] had desired and pressed to see him before."

"*Wednesday*, *March* 6*th.*—The King was not so well as he had been; his pulse rose in the morning, but sunk again at night, and he was much better and quite cheerful in the evening."

"*Sunday*, *March* 17*th.*—The King sent a note to Mr. Grenville (differently worded from what they usually were,) to appoint him at two o'clock the next day.* Mr. Grenville went to the Drawing Room, where the Queen told him she was afraid he would not agree with her in wish-

Montagu in April 1761, "an admirable *bon-mot* of George Selwyn, though not a new one. When there was a malicious report that the eldest Tufton was to marry Dr. Duncan, Selwyn said—'How often will she repeat that line of Shakespeare—

Wake Duncan with thy knocking: would thou couldst.'"

Walpole's Corresp., vol. iii. p. 397. Ed. 1857.

* The note was as follows;—

"Sunday, 10 P.M.

"Mr. Grenville.—I would have you attend me to-morrow at two."—*Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. p. 121.

ing that the King would not see his servants so often, nor talk so much upon business. Mr. Grenville told her Majesty, that for his part he never wished to break in upon his Majesty. She again repeated that she thought he had better not speak much upon business."

"*Monday, March 18th.*—Mr. Grenville found the King's countenance and manner a good deal estranged, but he was civil, and talked upon several different subjects."

"*Friday, March 22nd.*—Mr. Grenville went to the Queen's House to carry a written note for his Majesty, in case he did not see him. The page told him the King was not so well as he had been, and that the physicians had seen him in the morning, and desired him to keep quiet. Mr. Grenville sent up the note, and received the answer in writing. The King was cupped the night before."

"*Monday, March 25th.*—The King sent Mr. Grenville a note to appoint him at two o'clock: he found his Majesty well to all appearance; he had been out to take the air."

"*Wednesday, April 3rd.*—Mr. Grenville received notice from Lord Sandwich that the King was to have a levee. Mr. Grenville went to it: the King spoke civilly to him, and took notice of his having a very bad cold." *

To the world it was given out that the King's illness at this time was a cough and fever; that he had caught cold in coming out of the House of Lords; and lastly that, owing to the unskilfulness of his physicians, a humour, which ought to have appeared in his face, had settled upon his chest. His malady, however,—notwithstanding the truth was kept so profound a secret by the Court as apparently not to have been suspected even by the Prime Minister—is now known to have been of the same distressing nervous character as those which at intervals deranged his reason in after years.†

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 115—125.

† Adolphus, in allusion to the painful nature of the King's disorder, observes—

The King's illness occasioned a general consternation. Not that he had become more popular with his subjects, but that the times were pregnant with dangers and discontents. No provision had been made for a Regency in the event of his demise, and unfortunately the heir to the throne was only an infant of two years old. The settlement of a Regency had, in fact, been most culpably postponed. In vain Lord Holland had formerly urged the importance of the question both on Lord Bute and Lord Mansfield: Grenville and his colleagues had motives of their own for keeping it in abeyance.* Fortunately, however, the King had not only good sense enough to appreciate the urgency of the case, but also sufficient strength of mind not to shrink from taking the initiative on the occasion. No sooner, therefore, was he well enough to transact business with his Ministers, than he called their attention to the uncertainty of life, as exemplified by his own recent illness; at the same time desiring them to frame such a measure for carrying on the Government in the event of his decease, as would be likely to meet with the approval of Parliament.† Another person, whom the King sent for, to consult with, was the Duke of Cumberland. "I rejoiced," writes the Duke, "in seeing his Apr. 7.
Majesty thoroughly recovered. He said he was; but that yet his late illness had been an additional reason for him to desire to speak to me; for that, though he was now well, yet God alone knew how soon an accident might befall him."‡ In Parliament, the King's disinterested conduct

"I did not mention this fact in former editions of this work, because I knew that the King and all who loved him were desirous that it should not be drawn into notice. So anxious were they on this point, that Smollett having intimated it in his Complete History of England, the text was revised in the general impression. A very few copies in the original form were disposed of, and they are now rare."—*Adolphus's History of England*, vol. i. p. 175. Edition, 1840. See also the *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxvi. p. 240.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 97.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 125; Walpole's George 3, vol. ii. pp. 99, 107.

‡ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 186—7.

met with all the commendation which it deserved. "Whilst we contemplate with admiration"—say the Lords and Commons in their Address—"that magnanimity which enables your Majesty to look forward with a cool composure of thought to an event, which, whenever it shall please God to permit it, must overwhelm your loyal subjects with the bitterest distraction of grief, we cannot but be deeply affected with that compassionate sentiment of your royal heart, which suggests a provision for their comfort, under so severe an affliction." *

It was the earnest desire of the King, not only that he might be allowed to nominate a Regent by will, but also that the name of the person he might select should be known to no one but himself. His object, as he told both Lord Mansfield and Grenville, was to prevent "faction" in the royal family.† For instance, had he openly named the Queen, it might have given offence to the Princess Dowager, or, had he named the latter, it would doubtless have distressed the Queen. But whatever may have been the King's motives, Grenville naturally objected to investing his Sovereign with so great a discretionary power. The two persons, whom he most disliked and feared in the world, were the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute; either of whom the King, in the event of his wishes being indulged, would have the power of nominating to the Regency. The result of Grenville's objections was a compromise between the Sovereign and his Ministers; the King, on the one hand, gaining his object of being permitted to nominate by will, and the Ministers, on the other side, stipulating that his choice should be restricted "to the Queen or any other person of the royal family usually residing in Great Britain."‡ Such at least were the terms which, on the 24th of April, the

* Annual Register for 1765, p. 258.
† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 126, 157.
‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 101—6.

King, in a speech from the throne, submitted to both Houses of Parliament.*

The vagueness of the above proposition—the entire want of all explanation as to what persons ought, or ought not, to be considered as members of the "Royal Family"—could scarcely, we imagine, have been accidental. Surely, for instance, so cautious and experienced a Minister as Grenville must have foreseen the certainty of the name of the Princess Dowager being, sooner or later, dragged before Parliament, and the probability of her title to the Regency being made the subject of angry discussion. It was his duty, then, to have rendered the provisions of the Bill as clear as possible, in order, as far as was practicable, to prevent the peace of the royal family being disturbed, or the dignity of the Crown compromised. The King not only viewed the matter in this sensible light, but himself pointed out to Grenville the necessity of guarding against any obscurity in the Bill. "Every part relating to it," was his expression, "ought to be made as clear as possible."†

But Grenville and his colleagues were apparently actuated by private reasons of their own. The King's recent illness had shown his life to be a precarious one. In the opinion of at least one of his Ministers he was in an incurable consumption, and consequently, should he be empowered to nominate his mother to the Regency, a few weeks would in all probability see her invested with the sovereign authority, with the detested Bute for her Minister. To prevent this dreaded consummation was the primary object of Grenville and his colleagues. To have advised, however, a high-spirited young King to "stigmatize his own mother by Act of Parliament"—by voluntarily proclaiming her unfitted to be Regent—was of course out of the question, and accordingly Ministers resolved on leaving to Parliament

* Annual Register for 1765, pp. 39, 257.
† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 146.

the onus of her exclusion, which they seem to have anticipated as an almost certain event.

The Regency Bill had no sooner been introduced into the House of Lords, than it gave rise, as might have been expected, to numberless discussions, disagreements, and disputes. Some of the arguments, introduced in the course of debate, were curious and entertaining enough. For instance, Lord Lyttelton argued, and very sensibly too, that to entrust the Sovereign with the power of appointing an "unknown person" was dangerous and unconstitutional. The Duke of Richmond wished to be instructed who *were* the "Royal Family"? Was the Princess Dowager of the royal family? Were the King's aunt, the Princess of Hesse—his cousin, the King of Prussia—his brother-in-law the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick—to be considered as members of the royal family? Another peer, Lord Denbigh, defined the royal family as all who were prayed for in the Common Prayer Book. Lord Mansfield mysteriously intimated that he had his private convictions on the subject, but declined to divulge them. Lastly, Lord Dartmouth plausibly suggested that the one or two persons, to whom the King would doubtless confide his secret, would have all the plotting and intrigue to themselves. One fact, however, was made manifest by the language of the Duke of Bedford and Lord Halifax, that Ministers were resolved, if possible, to exclude the Princess Dowager. Only such members of the Royal Family, they argued, were eligible, as were in the order of succession, thus unmistakably repudiating her eligibility.

When, on the 2nd of May, the House of Lords reassembled, the discussions and arguments became more confused and complicated than ever. The Duke of Richmond desired to be informed whether the Queen was naturalized? The Lord Chancellor was of opinion that she was naturalized by the fact of her marriage, an opinion which was

subsequently confirmed by the decision of the Judges. The Duke then wished to know if the Princess Dowager was, or was not, *one of the royal family*—as if there could be a doubt whether a man's own mother was a member of his own family! * Happily, in the midst of these frivolous discussions, the Duke of Richmond rose from his seat and boldly proposed that the House should declare the Princess eligible for the office of Regent. The question was negatived, and the House broke up.

But, though fortune had so far favoured Ministers, they were not without apprehensions as regarded the final success of their scheme. Much as the House of Commons disliked the Princess Dowager, Grenville was still more an object of their dislike, and consequently there existed the chance of the Lower House viewing her pretensions in a much more favourable light than the Lords had done. Under these circumstances, it is said to have occurred to the two Secretaries of State, Lords Halifax and Sandwich, that could the King, either by argument or artifice, be induced to sacrifice his mother to the popular outcry, by himself proclaiming her disqualified for the Regency, no more difficulty need be apprehended on the part of Parliament. "They conceived," writes Walpole, "that the omission of the Princess would be universally approved. They flattered themselves with acquiring such popularity by that act, that the King would not dare to remove them." † According to Walpole's further account, the two Earls proceeded to the palace, May 3. where they were immediately admitted to the presence of their unsuspecting Sovereign. Not a moment—they assured

* Yet, notwithstanding the apparent puerility of these propositions, we are assured that both the Lord Chancellor and Lord Mansfield had previously declared their opinion to the King, that neither his own mother nor his own wife were of the Royal Family. It would seem, however, that the Lord Chancellor subsequently changed his opinion, and decided that the words "Royal Family" *did* include the Princess Dowager.—*Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. p. 148; *Walpole's Letters*, vol. iv. p. 360. Ed. 1857; *Walpole's Reign of George 3*, vol. ii. p. 118.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 150.

the King—was to be lost: the House of Commons would inevitably strike the name of the Princess out of the Bill; the best, if not the only means, of saving his own honour and that of the Princess was by authorizing his Ministers to announce publicly in Parliament that he had withdrawn her name from the Bill.* Unhappily the manœuvre proved but too successful; the King in great distress of mind yielding to the exhortations of his Constitutional advisers. "I consent," he is reported to have said to Halifax, "if it will satisfy my people." As the elated Earls returned through the ante-chamber, Halifax whispered to Grenville, who was standing there, that all was right. Grenville himself then entered the royal closet and received from the King an account of what had passed. Halifax, he said, had assured him that the omission of the Princess's name would "make the whole easier, particularly in the House of Commons," and accordingly he had consented to her exclusion.†

In the mean time, Halifax had hurried to the House of Peers, where the discussions on the Regency Bill had been revived. As he passed by the Duke of Richmond, he asked him impetuously whether he was satisfied? "By no means;" replied the Duke; "you have rejected my motion and left my doubt in full force."—"Then, my Lord," said Halifax, "if you will move it again I will satisfy you." The Duke took him at his word; upon which Halifax, rising from his seat, astounded the House with the announcement that the King had expressed himself in favour of his mother's exclusion. The friends of the Princess and of Lord Bute were thunderstruck. The King's

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 124, 125; Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 350.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 149, 150. The Duke of Richmond had moved to insert the words,—"Her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager, and others, descended from the late King, now resident in England." When Halifax quitted the royal presence, it was with authority from the King to strike out the name of the Princess; inserting that of the Queen, and leaving the rest of the proposition unaltered.—*Walpole's Reign of George 3*, vol. ii. pp. 123, 124.

better feelings, they were convinced, had been only too successfully tampered with. On the other hand, Ministers and their friends were elated beyond measure. The satisfaction depicted on their countenances was a matter of general observation. "The Duke of Bedford," writes Walpole, "almost danced about the House for joy." *

During the two following days, the King had time to reflect upon the precipitate step which he had taken. His nature was generous and affectionate, and accordingly the mere surmise that he might have yielded too readily to the arguments of Halifax and Sandwich, and had consequently been guilty of an act of injustice towards his mother, naturally caused him much uneasiness. He was probably in this frame of mind when, on Sunday, the 5th, he was attended by the Lord Chancellor, who, if Walpole's version be correct, very honestly explained to his Sovereign how improperly he had been induced to act.† "Intoxicated," writes Walpole, "with presumption, or blind with the thirst of revenge, still it is hard to conceive how they dared to venture on so provoking and desperate an insult." ‡ The King was now able to understand in its full extent the cruel deception, as well as the affront, which had been put upon him; and, accordingly, when Grenville shortly afterwards was admitted to his presence, he found him in a state of great indignation and distress. Grenville himself informs us, that when he entered the royal closet the King not only "coloured," but spoke with "great emotion" of the disregard which had been shown to the Princess, his mother. How painful, he said, would be the predicament in which he should be placed, should the eligibility of the Princess be maintained by the Opposition members in the House of

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 124; Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 350.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 152.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 125.

Commons, and yet be repudiated by his own Ministers! It would be an affront, he said, to his mother, which "he could not bear." His agitation was excessive. It was in vain that Grenville attempted to lay all the blame on his colleagues: the King was too provoked and indignant to vouchsafe him any reply. When, at the departure of Grenville, Lord Mansfield entered the royal closet, the King opened his whole heart to the great lawyer. He had been "surprised" he said, by Lord Halifax; the treatment which he had met with was too cruel. So affected, indeed, was he, as to shed tears.*

As the King lay under no obligation to secrecy, the story of the treatment which he had met with speedily transpired. The result was a reaction of popular feeling in his favour, which greatly encouraged and assisted the efforts which the friends of the Princess Dowager were making in her behalf. Accordingly, so soon as the Regency Bill had been submitted to the House of Commons, a personal friend of the Princess, Morton, Chief Justice of Chester,† made a formal motion to insert her name in the document; a proceeding in which he was staunchly supported by Edward Kynaston, an enthusiastic Jacobite, by the younger George Onslow, and by Samuel Martin.‡ By the two latter, Grenville seems to have been assailed with telling effect. "The Princess," said Martin, fixing his eye sternly upon the First Minister, "has had occasion to see that the professions made to her were not from the heart." Grenville was furious. "Whatever *you* say to me," he afterwards observed to Onslow, "is fair; but there is one man, Martin, whose words I never will forgive."§ If Grenville, as there is every reason to believe, had anticipated an easy victory

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 148 to 157.

† See ante, pp. 153, 154. He was M.P. for Abingdon, leader on the Oxford Circuit, and Deputy High Steward of the University. He died on the 25th of July 1780.

‡ See ante, p. 213, &c.

§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 144, 145, and note.

over the Princess and her friends, he was destined to experience a bitter disappointment. So personally unpopular was he, that many members of the Opposition supported Morton's motion with their votes, while others walked out of the House without voting on either side. Possibly, had Government put forth all its strength, the result might have been different; but, of course, it was out of the question for Ministers to speak and vote against the mother of their Sovereign. Accordingly, notwithstanding Halifax's prediction to the King, that the Princess would be excluded from the Regency by an unanimous vote of the House of Commons, her name was reinstated in the Bill by an overwhelming majority. But more humiliating still was the plight of Ministers in the House of Lords, on finding themselves reduced to the awkward necessity of calling upon the peers to cancel their former vote, by declaring the eligibility of the Princess. During the reading of the Bill, as well as during the speech of their mouthpiece, Sandwich, the countenances of the Duke of Bedford and Halifax were watched by the House with eager curiosity. Neither said a word; Halifax, according to Walpole, "making the most abject and contemptible figure one can conceive." * May 13.

To what extent Grenville may have been to blame in regard to this transaction, it seems to be difficult to ascertain. According to the explanation given by him to his Sovereign in the Closet, it was his colleagues alone who were in fault in the matter, if fault there was. Nevertheless, if Grenville did not actually originate the deception, which is said to have been practised upon his royal master, we cannot but think that it must have been connived at by him. Not only was he morbidly jealous of any interference with his legitimate authority, but, on this very

* Walpole's Letters, vol. i. p. 361.

subject of the Regency, we find him somewhat testily calling the King to account for having imparted his views to the Lord Chancellor and Halifax, without having previously communicated them to himself. "He observed to his Majesty," he writes, "that whatever difficulty there was in this affair, it would fall heavier upon him, who was to carry it through the House of Commons, than upon any one of his servants whatever."* Surely then neither Halifax nor Sandwich would have taken the initiative in deceiving their Sovereign, unless assured of the tacit, if not the expressed, concurrence of their leader. The inference therefore seems to be that, so long as Grenville considered he ran no risk of being compromised himself, he purposely closed his eyes to what was passing around him, leaving the dirty work to be performed by his unscrupulous colleagues.

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 139. According to Halifax's report to Grenville, it was the King himself who "*proposed*" the exclusion of his mother—certainly a most unlikely circumstance.—*Ibid.*, vol. iii. pp. 149, 157. But if Grenville lays so much stress upon the authority of Halifax, why does not he corroborate it by the evidence of Sandwich, who was also present in the royal closet? Surely, if Sandwich's evidence supported the assertions of Halifax, Grenville would only have been too glad to produce him as a witness. As for Sandwich's and Halifax's personal share in the transaction, improbable as it is that they should have understood the King to originate a proposition which directly and publicly stigmatized his own mother, there is nevertheless the possibility of their having mistaken his meaning; and they are therefore certainly entitled to the benefit of any doubt that may be thought to exist on the subject.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dislike of the King to the Grenville Ministry—Negotiations with Mr. Pitt broken off by Lord Temple's refusal to co-operate in forming a Government—Harsh conditions imposed on the King by the Grenville Ministry on their resuming office—Unfavourable effect on the King's health.

THE imposition which was believed to have been practised upon the King by his Ministers—the "notorious lie" which, according to Walpole, Halifax and Sandwich had told him—the reckless way in which they had compromised the dignity of the Crown—the slovenly manner, to say the least of it, in which they had prepared the Regency Bill—the public affront which they had offered to the Princess Dowager—and, lastly, to use the language of Burke, their general "want of concert and want of capacity" *—were sufficient to have disgusted and exasperated even the most patient of monarchs. Grenville, moreover, had for some time past been personally unwelcome to the King. His incessant harangues in the royal closet—no less tiresome than his speeches in the House of Commons—as well as his unjust suspicions and peevish denunciations of Bute, had repeatedly provoked the King almost beyond endurance. "When he has wearied me for two hours," said his Majesty on one occasion to Lord Bute, "he looks at his watch to see if he may not tire me for an hour more." † Of the effect which these harangues occasionally produced on the

* Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 121, 2nd Edition.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 160.

King, Grenville himself has enabled us to form an adequate conception. "The King," he writes on the 28th of April, "during this conversation seemed exceedingly agitated and disturbed: he changed countenance and flushed so much that the water stood in his eyes from the excessive heat of his face." * To the close of the King's life, it is said, he never alluded to Grenville's wearisome declamations without a shudder.

That the King, under all these circumstances, should have been anxious to shake off his present Ministers, was only to be expected. Accordingly when, on the 16th of May, Grenville requested his Majesty's commands relative to some Parliamentary business, the King replied to him with provoking coolness—"There is no hurry, Mr. Grenville; I mean to have Parliament adjourned not prorogued." Ignorant of the King's meaning, as well as startled at the authoritative tone in which he spoke, Grenville enquired what reasons he was to assign to Parliament for the Adjournment. The world, he added, would naturally conclude that his Majesty intended to change his Ministers. At these words the King was unable any longer to conceal his agitation. "Mr. Grenville," he exclaimed, "I will speak to you about that another time. I promise you I will speak to you. You may depend upon it I will speak to you." Not less stern was the King's language to Grenville on the 19th, on the occasion of the latter questioning him as to the state of the pending Ministerial changes. He would shortly speak to him on the subject, replied the King; at the same time commanding him to adjourn Parliament till Monday fortnight. To this Grenville objected that, being virtually out of office, such a step would be a very improper one for him to take. "Then who," enquired the King, "is the proper person to adjourn

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 140.

Parliament?"—"Whoever," replied Grenville, "your Majesty destines to be my successor." *

Thus was the King bent upon getting rid of his present Constitutional advisers; but from what ranks was he to supply their places? Newcastle he had thought of for Premier, but Newcastle had recently deeply offended him by his conduct in relation to the Regency question. Bute, detested and despised as he was by the nation, was quite out of the question. The King would have greatly preferred Pitt; but the exorbitance of Pitt's demands, the impracticability of his nature, and the recollection of the mortifying result of his last appeal to the "Great Commoner," naturally induced the King to hesitate before he again applied for succour to a person at once so wayward and so imperious. Moreover, Pitt was the brother-in-law and sworn ally of Lord Temple, and Temple, it should be again remembered, was the arch political intriguer of the day, the inveterate foe of the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute, the fomenter of mob riots, the personal friend and staunch supporter of Wilkes. Lastly, Pitt was tolerably certain to demand the reinstatement of the great Whig Lords in the Cabinet as a body, and such a step the King had publicly declared to be incompatible with his "honour."

In the mean time, the King had applied for counsel and assistance to the eldest and most sagacious Prince of his House, the Duke of Cumberland. "The King," writes the Duke, "the better to put me *au fait* of the true state of his affairs, went through, in a masterly and exact manner, all that had passed since Lord Bute's resigning the Treasury. He also went through Mr. Pitt's two audiences of August 1763; particularizing with great justice the characters of several persons who are now upon the stage or who are but just dropped off." † The Duke

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 163. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 165, 171.

† The Duke of Cumberland's "Account of the Negociation for the intended

had no particular reason for loving his royal nephew, and still less reason for loving Pitt, who, when he had been in power, had made a point of excluding him from any political influence.* But whatever treatment the Duke might have met with, either from Pitt or from the Court, it was not in his noble nature to allow his private resentments to interfere with his duty to his Sovereign and to the Head of his Family, and accordingly, by his advice, the Court opened a negotiation with the "Great Commoner." The Duke was right. Without Pitt's support it was evident that no Administration could prove a lasting one. Pitt alone, by his genius, his popularity, and by his influence with the "Great Families," had it in his power to construct a strong Government; to restore the dignity of the kingly office, to arrest the license of the populace, and to render the laws respected and obeyed. The fate of the country, indeed, may almost be said to have been in his hands. "Nothing," writes Edmund Burke to Flood, "but an intractable temper in your friend Pitt can prevent a most admirable and lasting system from being put together, and this crisis will show whether pride or patriotism be predominant in his character; for you may be assured, he has it now in his power to come into the service of his country upon any plan of politics he may choose to dictate, with great and honourable terms to himself, and to every friend he has in the world, and with such a strength of power as will be equal to everything but absolute despotism over the King and kingdom. A few days will show whether he will take this part, or that of continuing on his back at Hayes talking fustian, excluded from all Ministerial, and incapable of all Parliamentary service." †

In the mean time also, the Duke of Cumberland had been armed with the King's authority to negotiate with, and to

change of Ministers in April and May 1765." *Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. pp. 201, 202.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 225.

† Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 122, 2nd Edition.

make an offer of almost full terms to Pitt. The first interview between these two remarkable men took place on Sunday the 12th of May, in the sick chamber of the latter at Hayes. During a *tête-à-tête* conversation which lasted for an hour and a half, the Duke discussed with the illustrious invalid the grave necessities of the King's affairs; at the same time intimating to him how anxiously his Majesty desired to see him at the head of his councils. "I represented to him," writes the Duke, "the manner in which this Administration used his Majesty, and that no time was to be lost, as the Parliament must soon be up—that this country looked up to him as the man who had been the author of the great successes during the war—that they almost universally wished him at the head of public affairs."* The Duke, as he had perhaps anticipated, found the "Great Commoner" haughty, pompous, and exorbitant in his demands, yet not altogether impracticable. Unhappily, however, Pitt's evil genius, Lord Temple, had acquired an extraordinary influence over his mind, and Temple, who had been invited to the conference, was at this time rapidly posting towards Hayes. Pitt was not only attached to him by the ordinary ties of relationship and friendship, and by having been a sharer with him in past hazards and triumphs, but he also lay under personal obligations to his brother-in-law. Temple's purse had probably been often open to Pitt; indeed, in 1755, when Pitt was deprived of the lucrative post of Paymaster of the Forces, we find Temple generously accommodating his brother-in-law with a thousand a-year till the advent of more propitious times.† "He is my friend," Pitt had recently exclaimed in the House of

* The Duke of Cumberland's "Account of the Negociation for the intended Change of Ministers in April and May 1765." *Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. pp. 201, 202.

† Grenville Papers, vol. i. p. 149.

Commons; "his fidelity is as unshaken as his virtue. We went into office together and we went out of office together, and we will die together." *

That Temple, notwithstanding Pitt's expressed intention to recommend him to the King for the post of First Lord of the Treasury, had hastened to Hayes with the deliberate intention of breaking off the negotiation between his brother-in-law and the Court, little doubt can exist. The primary object of his ambition was to cement a political alliance between "the three brothers," as Temple, George Grenville, and Pitt were usually styled; an union which it was intended should become the paramount party in the State. Grenville, it is true, had for some time past been the object of his brother's sarcasm and abuse; but the mortal offence which the former had recently given to Temple's bitterest enemies, the Princess Dowager and Bute, had not only gone far to restore him to the good graces of his elder brother, but, a few days after the conference at Hayes, effected their entire reconciliation.† At all events, from the time that Temple made his appearance in Pitt's sick chamber, the discussions took a turn unfavourable to the Duke's earnest wishes and hopes. No sooner did Temple begin to take a part in the deliberations, than fresh difficulties presented themselves, and Pitt's hesitation to close with the offers of the Court became more and more evident.‡ "I cannot help saying," writes the Duke, "that I think he was more verbose and pompous than Mr. Pitt." § Eventually the influence, if not the arguments, of Temple prevailed. No one however could

* Parliamentary History, vol. xv. p. 1363.

† The reconciliation between Lord Temple and George Grenville took place on the 22nd of May at Lord Temple's house in Pall Mall. In the course of the following month we find Grenville happily domesticated at Stow; nor was the renewed good understanding between the two brothers ever afterwards interrupted.—*See the Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 42, 43.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 166.

§ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 194.

be more fully aware than Pitt how urgently his country needed his services, and accordingly it was not without a sigh—perhaps not without a feeling of self-reproach—that he rejected the liberal offers of his Sovereign. At the moment of his parting with Temple, he mournfully addressed him in the words of Virgil*—

> "Extinxti me, teque, soror, populumque, patresque
> Sidonios, urbemque tuam."
>
> *Æneid*, lib. iv. ver. 682.
>
> "You, by this fatal stroke, and I, and all
> Your senate, people, and your country, fall."
>
> *Pitt's Translation.*

"This is neither Administration nor Government;" writes Walpole to Lord Hertford. "The King is out of town; and this is the crisis in which Mr. Pitt, who could stop every evil, chooses to be more unreasonable than ever."†

It was with feelings of the deepest disappointment that the Duke of Cumberland returned to the King at Buckingham House, bringing with him, to use his own expression, "nothing but compliments and doubts in answer to his Majesty's gracious offers."‡ Personal dislike of Grenville seems to have whetted his zeal in the cause of his royal nephew. "There is no animal on the face of the earth," writes Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, "that the Duke has a more thorough contempt for, or a greater aversion to, than Grenville."§ The King, too, was greatly distressed at the unsuccessful result of his uncle's mission. Again he had committed the fatal error of exasperating one set of Ministers, before he had secured the services of their successors; again he had laid bare the extreme weakness of his position; and again he was reduced to the humiliating alternative of inviting his former tyrants to return to power, with the

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 174.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 364. Ed. 1857.

‡ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 198.

§ Letter to Sir Andrew Mitchell, June 4, 1765: *Ellis's Original Letters*, vol. iv. p. 481. 2nd Series.

additional mortification of knowing that their demands, as well as their insolence, would rise with the occasion. That their treatment of him had already been sufficiently dictatorial and insulting there is ample evidence to prove. "The King's Ministers," as the Earl of Albemarle told Pitt on the authority of the Duke of Cumberland, "had taken such possession of the Closet that they scarcely acted with decency to their master."* The Duke of Cumberland himself speaks feelingly of "the *déboires* and indignities with which *these gentlemen in power* insulted his Majesty each day, instead of applying themselves to the good of the public in general, or to restoring to his Majesty the affections of his people."† Lastly, Mr. Stuart Mackenzie writes to Sir Andrew Mitchell; —"His Majesty, offended in the highest degree with the insolence offered him by his present Ministers, would have put any mortal in their place that could have carried *on* business."‡ The King, indeed—however unwisely he may have acted—was much to be pitied. The wearisome lectures of Grenville, the duplicity of Halifax, the insulting tirades of Bedford against Bute,§ were again to be encountered and endured by him. Again his word was to be called in question; again his friends were to be ostracized, his wishes thwarted, and his motives either misinterpreted or misunderstood. Moreover, the reconciliation between Lord Temple and George Grenville threatened him with fresh annoyance; a fact of which he was so well aware that, when informed by the latter of what had taken place, he was unable to conceal his vexation. "I do not trouble myself," he said, "about the friendships of others, and wish nobody would trouble themselves about mine."‖

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 193.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 188.

‡ Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. p. 481. 2nd Series.

§ See the Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 280, and *post*, pp. 295, 297—300.

‖ Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. i. p. 159. Lord Temple had assured the Duke of Cumberland that his reconciliation with his brother was only a "pri-

In the mean time, while the negotiations with Pitt had been still pending, the conduct of the King, as well as of those who were supposed to be aiding and abetting him in his object of changing the Government, had been highly resented by Ministers and their friends. For instance, hitherto the Houses of Percy and Russell had associated on the most affectionate terms; yet no sooner was it rumoured that Lord Northumberland was the person employed in conveying the necessary communications between the King and the Duke of Cumberland—and further, that, late in the evening of the 18th, his Majesty, had admitted him with his own hand by a private entrance into his gardens at Richmond—than the Earl found himself exposed to the rudest possible treatment, of which what follows may be taken as an example. The Duke and Duchess of Bedford happened to be in affliction, and accordingly, for the amiable purpose of paying them a visit of condolence, Lord Northumberland carried his Countess to Bedford House, where they had a right to expect, if not a cordial, at least a civil reception. George Grenville, however, who had been previously announced, appears to have communicated to the company the apocryphal incident of the Earl's mysterious admission into Richmond Gardens, and accordingly, when Lord Northumberland made his appearance, not only was he suffered to remain standing—not only was not a syllable addressed to him—but the Duke of Bedford even went so far as to turn on his heel and contemptuously quit the apartment. "Words," writes Walpole who was present, "cannot describe the disdainful manner in which they were received." The Duchess and her friends even condescended to the vulgarity of talking *at* their guests. "The language which passed," writes Grenville, who still lingered in the

vate" one, and did not "extend to political connection."—"But that, my Lord," said the Duke drily, "will I suppose soon follow."—*Walpole's Reign of George 3*, vol. ii. p. 171.

apartment, "could not be very pleasing." According to Walpole, the Earl "was kept standing an hour exposed to all their raillery."—"Faith!" whispered Lord Waldegrave to one of the company, "This is too much." *

By the morning of Tuesday, the 21st, it seems to have been pretty generally understood that the negotiation with Pitt had miscarried; and accordingly, at eight o'clock on the evening of that day, Ministers held a meeting at Bedford House, for the express purpose of fixing the conditions which it would be expedient to impose upon their royal master, in the probable event of his soliciting them to retain their places. "The King," writes Walpole to Lord Hertford, "is reduced to the mortification—and it is extreme—of taking his old Ministers again. They are insolent enough you may believe. Grenville has treated his master in the most impertinent manner, and they are now actually discussing the terms that they mean to impose on their captive."—"You have more than once," continues Walpole, "seen your old master † reduced to surrender up his Closet to a Cabal; but never with such circumstances of insult, indignity, and humiliation!" ‡

It was on the afternoon of this day that, previously to the meeting at Bedford House, the King again received Grenville in the royal closet. The haughty Minister, as he himself informs us, found his sovereign "in great disorder and agitation." Concealment being no longer necessary on the part of the King, he freely admitted the utter failure of his recent overtures to the Opposition. As far as Grenville was personally concerned, the King's language to him was sufficiently kind and conciliatory. He knew, he told him, that he had "served him faithfully, ably, and

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 366. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 176. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 158.

† George the Second.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 365, 366. Edition, 1857.

with attachment." But very different was the language in which he spoke of the other members of the Administration. "In other parts of his Government," said the young King, "there had been slackness, inability, precipitation, and neglect*—" a fact, he added, which no one knew better than Grenville himself. He was then constrained to put the humiliating question to Grenville, whether he was again "willing to serve him?" Grenville affected to hesitate. Bute, he intimated, was evidently the real Minister behind the scenes; all the world, he said, perceived that he was the author of the late "unhappy step." This the King denied, though, in the present state of his Minister's feelings, with little chance of his word being credited. The world, continued Grenville, would with difficulty be induced to believe otherwise. The tedious Minister then began to dilate upon his own services and merits. He had "sacrificed hitherto," he said, "every consideration of interest, pleasure, leisure, and happiness, nay of health too, to his willingness and desire to serve his Majesty." Under circumstances, he said, of great difficulty he had conducted the Government in a manner far surpassing his most sanguine expectations; he had succeeded in "managing the Chancellor's mind;" and, though the Duke of Bedford was his enemy, he had "united himself with his Grace for his Majesty's service." Was it not, then, cruel and mortifying to him, he asked, to find himself less acceptable to his Majesty than two years previously had been the case? Furthermore, he doubted whether the King, by his recent course of action, had not put it out of the power of his Ministers to resume office. At all events, he said, he could return no answer to his Majesty till he had consulted with his colleagues. The King, distressed and anxious beyond all measure, pressed him for a "categorical answer," but to no

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 177.

purpose. Accordingly, he was left with no other alternative but to urge his Minister to employ "all haste" in communicating with his colleagues; enjoining him to return to him at an early hour, which he named, in order that he might be relieved as soon as possible from his present painful state of suspense.*

The great impatience with which the King awaited the return of his Minister to Buckingham House, may be gleaned from the following note, which was placed in the hands of Grenville while still seated in council with his colleagues.

The King to Mr. Grenville.

"15 min. past 9, P.M.

"MR. GRENVILLE,

"I am surprised that you are not yet come, when you know it was my orders to be attended this evening. I expect you therefore to come the moment you receive this." †

Grenville, of course, had no choice but to hasten to his Sovereign, who, with "great impatience," enquired the result of the conference. The arrival of the King's note, replied Grenville, had abruptly broken up the meeting, before Ministers had been afforded sufficient time to come to a decision on the momentous question which his Majesty had submitted for their consideration. The King, under these circumstances, had again no alternative but to prescribe expedition to his Minister, who, accordingly, at an early
May 22. hour on the following morning, again met his colleagues in council. At twelve o'clock he waited on the King to apprise him of the result. Ministers, he said, had four requisitions to make. First, that they should be empowered to announce the total exclusion, for the future, of Lord Bute from all interference whatever in public affairs; secondly, the dismissal of Lord Bute's brother, Mr. James Stuart Mackenzie, from

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 177—180. † *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 180.

his office of Lord Privy Seal in Scotland; thirdly, the removal of Lord Holland from the post of Paymaster of the Forces; and fourthly, the appointment of the Marquis of Granby to be Commander in Chief of the Army. There was also a further requisition relative to the affairs of Ireland. In answer to the King's dry enquiry whether Ministers had been unanimous in adopting these resolutions, Grenville replied in the affirmative. And your opinions, Mr. Grenville, enquired the King, coincide with those of your colleagues? Had it been otherwise, Sir, was the answer, I should not have been the bearer of them. And they are absolutely "*sine quâ non*," asked the King? Unless they had been considered indispensable, continued Grenville, Ministers would not have troubled his Majesty by submitting them to his judgment. I will consider of them, said the King, and give you my answer in the evening. Grenville bowed and retired.*

Accordingly, at eleven o'clock the same night, the King sent for Grenville. With regard, he said, to the first of the demands made upon him, he was ready to "promise and declare" that neither directly nor indirectly, neither publicly nor privately, should Bute either influence or advise him in affairs of State. To the dismissal of Lord Holland he also gave his consent. The appointment of Lord Granby to the head of the Army would probably have been strongly opposed by the King, but, in this case, the difficulty was happily removed by Lord Granby waiving his claims during the life-time of the Duke of Cumberland, for whom the King was bound in honour to reserve the appointment. The last and great difficulty lay in the pertinacious demand of Ministers for the removal of Mr. Stuart Mackenzie from

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 180, 183, 184. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 174. In the Grenville Papers, (vol. iii. p. 41), will be found the actual Minutes of the conference headed,—"At a meeting at Mr. Grenville's in Downing Street, Wednesday, May 22, 1765—Present Lord Chancellor, Duke of Bedford, Lord Halifax, Lord Sandwich, Mr. Grenville."

office.* With the exception of his relationship to Lord Bute, no charge could be brought against this faithful and accomplished servant of the Crown. In former days, in order to accommodate the Government, Mr. Mackenzie had consented to exchange a lucrative appointment for that which it was now proposed to take from him; the King, at the same time, volunteering a promise that, during the remainder of his reign, Mr. Mackenzie should be secure in the tenure of his new office.† Yet this deliberate covenant Ministers now cruelly called upon their Sovereign to break.

The effect which this last-named demand produced upon the mind of the King was inexpressibly distressing. In vain, however, Grenville was a witness of his Sovereign's affliction. In vain his Majesty, to use Grenville's own words, "fell into great agitation," and, "strove in every manner possible" to save his honour and his servant. In vain he pointed out to Grenville that he should be disgraced if he yielded.‡ The cold man of business obstinately and obdurately held out. "I informed him," Grenville himself writes, "that Mr. Mackenzie's absolute removal was considered as too essential an object to be waived; a circumstance which evidently appeared to pain and distress him. He then asked me if I concurred with those gentlemen in thinking the whole indispensably necessary; to which I answered he should do me the justice to suppose I never would offer to him any proposition of which

* The Hon. James Archibald Stuart, only brother of Lord Bute, had assumed the name of Mackenzie on succeeding to the estate of his great-grandfather, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh. He had formerly been Minister at the Court of Sardinia from 1759 to 1762, on which occasion he had as his Secretary the well-known M. Dutens, who in his "Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement," more than once speaks in terms of high commendation of his patron and friend. See especially his character of him, in vol. i. p. 164, &c. Mr. Mackenzie married Lady Betty Campbell, daughter of John second Duke of Argyle, by whom he had no issue, and died April 6th 1800, at the age of eighty-two.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 175.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 187.

I did not approve. Upon this he told me, but with the greatest seeming reluctance, that he would give way to it. Observing that he continued to show marks of the greatest uneasiness, I most humbly entreated him to permit me to kiss his hand and leave his service, as I could not bear to be the channel of urging anything which so evidently distressed him. He answered—'I have said I will do it: can you expect more?' My entreaties to retire, and these expressions in return, were more than once repeated."*—"I will not" exclaimed the King, "throw my kingdom into confusion. You force me to break my word, and must be responsible for the consequences."† And again the King added—"Mr. Grenville, I have desired you to stay in my service; I see I must yield. I do it for the good of my people."‡ At so late an hour as four o'clock on the morning of the 23rd, we find Grenville writing to the Lord Chancellor that he has "only just returned from the Queen's House."§

Some satisfaction there is in being able to state, that the King's conduct at this trying juncture was not only forgiven, but was highly approved of, by the amiable and right-minded gentleman who was made the scapegoat on the occasion. When, on the evening of the 23rd, the King received Mr. Mackenzie in his closet, "a very affecting scene," according to Sir Gilbert Elliot, "passed between them."‖ "His Majesty," writes Mr. Mackenzie to Sir Andrew Mitchell, "sent for me to his closet, where I was a very considerable time with him, and if it were possible to love my excellent Prince now, better than I ever did before, I should certainly do it; for I have every reason that can induce a generous or a grateful mind to feel his goodness to

* Townshend MS.
† Sir Gilbert Elliot's MS. Diary: *Bedford Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 284.
‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 187.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 44. ‖ Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 284.

me. But such was his Majesty's situation at that time, that had he absolutely rejected my dismission, he would have put me in the most disagreeable situation in the world, and, what was of much higher consequence, he would have greatly distressed his affairs."* The King, however, though thus handsomely released from his engagement, appears to have found much difficulty in forgiving either his Ministers or himself. For some days he lived in almost entire seclusion. A Drawing Room, which was to have been
May 26. held, was postponed. On the following Sunday it was remarked that he abstained from receiving the Holy Sacrament.† The excitement, indeed, of the last three weeks threatened a return of the distressing malady by which he had so recently been prostrated. When, on the 24th, Grenville entered the royal closet, he found him "very gloomy and with an air of great dissatisfaction." Before night he found it necessary to consult the royal physicians. "They waited," writes Grenville, "a considerable time while the Dukes of York and Gloucester were with the King. At last the King opened the door himself, and called them in. He gave Sir William Duncan his hand to feel his pulse, which was quick; but bid him not mind it, because he had been hurried for some days past, but that he had eaten very little and had no fever. He enquired earnestly of Sir Clifton Wintringham‡ how the Duke of Cumberland fared after all his fatigue, and if he stood it well, and that for his part he never had slept above two hours for several days past."§

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. pp. 482–3, 2nd Series.
† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 284.
‡ See *post*, p. 315.
§ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 189.

CHAPTER XV.

The King's coolness to his Ministers—Want of unanimity in the Government—The Spitalfields Weavers have an interview with the King—The "Weavers' Riots"—Bedford House attacked—The King's seasonable promptitude—The King again unsuccessfully negotiates with Mr. Pitt—Earl Temple's refusal to take office—Perplexities of the King—Abruptness of the dismissal of Grenville and the Duke of Bedford—Formation of the Rockingham Administration.

THE indifferent grace with which the King received back his old Ministers, must have been apparent even to the youngest courtier. He not only, both in his personal and official communications with them, showed himself distant and uncompliant, but even at his levees made no scruple of encountering them with cold looks, while their political opponents were received by him with smiles and gracious words.* Such conduct may have been impolitic, and even unconstitutional, but, at the same time, the great provocation which the King had experienced from his Ministers must be taken into full account. Not only had he reason to reproach them with their insolent conduct towards him in the closet—with the cruel insult which they had offered to his mother, and the no less cruel manner in which they had compelled him to break his word, but he had other and more popular grounds for complaint. Anxious as he was to discharge, to the best of his ability, his obligations to his people, and—with this object in view—constantly

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 180. Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 377 Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 285, *note*.

and diligently employing himself in mastering a knowledge of the affairs of State and of the duties and details of the different Public Offices, the young King had a right to expect from his Ministers something like a corresponding amount of zeal and assiduity. On the contrary, to repeat his own words, he met for the most part with nothing but "slackness, inability, precipitation, and neglect."* At one time we find him complaining of the "hurry and precipitancy" with which Halifax discharged his public duties;† at another time lamenting the negligence of the Duke of Bedford in attending Cabinet Councils;‡ on a third occasion he is "ever complaining of Lord Halifax and Lord Sandwich;"§ and again, some time afterwards, we find him preferring complaints to the Duke of Cumberland that neither of these two lords "do any business," and that each is "extremely dilatory in public affairs."‖ For Sandwich, on account of his personal profligacy, the King seems to have entertained an especial aversion. "The King," writes Grenville, "speaks daily with more and more averseness to Lord Sandwich, and appears to have a settled dislike to his character."¶

Another complaint, which the King preferred against his Ministers, was a want of that unanimity and concert among themselves, in the absence of which no Administration could possibly establish a character for dignity and vigour. They had scarcely been installed in office, before they had begun to squabble respecting the distribution of patronage.** The Duke of Bedford and Grenville, observed the King, agreed on no other point but that of laying down the law to him.†† In November 1763 Grenville is angry with

* See *ante*, p. 279.
† Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 496.
‡ Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 513.
§ *Ibid.*
‖ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 195. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 193.
¶ Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 496.
** Grenville Papers, vol. ii. pp. 207, 211, 213, 216, 485.
†† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 193. The Duke, in August 1763, had certainly

Sandwich for attempting to "steal" the High Stewardship of Cambridge, and to return a member to Parliament for that county.* In January 1764 Halifax is "heated and eager" with Grenville on the subject of Colonial appointments and salaries.† In March following we find the Duke of Bedford writing an "angry letter" to Grenville for conferring a Red Ribbon on Lord Clive instead of on Colonel Draper.‡ In July 1764 Ministers are disagreed among themselves relative to the time to be allowed to France for discharging the debt due by her to Great Britain for the maintenance of French prisoners during the war.§ During the same month Grenville is dissatisfied with Halifax and Sandwich on account of the undecided language held by them to the French Ministers. He complains, also, that Halifax's general conduct and behaviour to him are very unsatisfactory.‖ In September, Grenville receives "a rather angry letter" from Halifax for refusing to consent to the recall of Lord Hertford from being ambassador at Paris.¶ During the same month the Lord Chancellor and the Duke of Bedford complain to the King of Halifax's "deadness in Council." ** In December, Grenville is forced to admit to the King that Halifax and Sandwich are in the habit of deliberately thwarting him in business relating to the Treasury.†† In May 1765, the Duke of Bedford is "greatly heated and incensed" against the Lord Chancellor for his conduct during the Regency Bill.‡‡ A few days afterwards, at a dinner at Lord Sandwich's, we find Grenville and Halifax mutually charging each other with unkindness. Grenville, about the same time, acknowledges to the King

recommended the King to dismiss Grenville from the premiership and send for Pitt, a fact which Grenville had not forgotten nor probably forgiven. *Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. p. 178.

* Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 228.
† *Ibid.*, p. 481.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 501.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 510.
‖ *Ibid.*, pp. 511, 512.
¶ *Ibid.*, pp. 514, 515.
** *Ibid.*, p. 515.
†† *Ibid.*, p. 532.
‡‡ *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 148.

that there had been "uneasiness among his servants."* Lastly, the only occasion on which we find the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Egmont, opening his lips at the council-table, is to use warm words to Halifax.†

In the charges of negligence and incapacity, which the King brought against his other Ministers, Grenville was not included. Unbending and domineering as the well-meaning statesman was in his intercourse with his Sovereign—tiresome as were his lectures, and cold and suspicious as was his nature—the King had never failed to do justice to his laborious industry, his personal integrity, and his sincere zeal for the public service. It was not till Grenville had completely identified himself with his colleagues—not till he had dictated to his Sovereign those cruel and insolent terms on which he had consented to retain office—that the King seems to have thought of sacrificing him with the rest of his Ministers. The King, moreover, not only did full justice to Grenville's administrative abilities, but up to a certain period of their intercourse seems, as has been already stated, to have felt as much personal regard for him as he could entertain for a man so phlegmatic and so determined to play the despot. Certainly, during the whole existence of Grenville's ill-assorted Administration, the King and his First Minister seem to have been the only individuals, between whom there prevailed any steady concert and co-operation. Grenville's own Diary, moreover, is replete with instances of kindness to him on the part of the King, and of evidences of his Sovereign's fullest confidence in his ungenial Minister. From the date, however, at which Grenville compelled his master to break his royal word, these kindly traits no longer occur in the Diary. On the contrary, the King's manner towards his Minister in the Closet is described as being merely "easy and civil."

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 178, 166. † *Ibid.*, p. 195.

Unfortunately, it was not in the suspicious nature of the offended Minister to attribute his Sovereign's civility to any other but an unworthy motive. "He has no reason," he writes, "to think that it proceeds from anything but disguise." * This unmistakable charge of duplicity on the part of Grenville, we cannot but consider as being most unfair. The King, indeed, so far from playing a part, never for a moment appears to have concealed the dislike which he had latterly begun to entertain for Grenville as well as for his colleagues. According to Walpole, who was a close and well-informed observer of passing events, his Majesty, from the day that Parliament had been prorogued, had taken "all opportunities of frowning on his tyrants and thwarting their desires." † Entries, in fact, in Grenville's own Diary corroborate the truth of this statement. For instance, Grenville happening to allude to the King's "goodness" in having conferred upon Lord Lorn the post of Privy Seal in Scotland, lately held by Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, his Majesty sarcastically replied—"It is your goodness, Mr. Grenville, not mine." ‡ Similarly unconciliating was his reply to Grenville when the latter proposed to him to confer, either upon Lord Waldegrave or upon Lord Suffolk, the vacant post of Master of the Horse to the Queen. It was no office of State, said the King. It was reasonable that her Majesty should like to please herself, and accordingly she had that morning nominated the Duke of Ancaster for the appointment. § Again, when, at Grenville's solicitation, the King consented to the appointment of Lord Robert Manners to a vacant Colonelcy of Dragoons, he took the opportunity of marking his dislike to Grenville, by sending for Lord Granby and letting

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 193.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 180.
‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 189.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 191. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 181.

him know that his uncle, Lord Robert, "owed the grace singly to him," and not to the influence of his Minister.* And yet it is in the face of these facts, that Grenville coolly charges the King with dissimulation! George the Third may not have been unversed in the arts of king-craft; yet, on the present occasion, he seems to have been much too angry with Grenville to render it likely that the "civility," with which he treated him, was intended to imply more than the ordinary courtesy, with which one gentleman usually behaves towards another. "The King," writes Lord Chesterfield in allusion to Grenville and his colleagues, "shows them all the public dislike possible, and at his levee hardly speaks to any of them, but speaks by the hour to anybody else." †

Another reason given by the King for being dissatisfied with his Ministers lay, in the formidable insurrectionary tumults, known as the "Weavers' Riots," which, in the month of May, frightened the metropolis from its propriety. In the opinion of the King, it was to the unpopularity of his servants that the disturbances were mainly attributable, and, owing to their timidity, that they were so long in being suppressed. For some time past, the Spitalfields weavers, unable to compete with foreign manufacturers, had been in a condition of unprecedented distress. Great numbers had been thrown out of employment, and many were almost without food. In order to remedy the evil, a Bill had been carried through the House of Commons, which, while it promised to improve the condition of the English weavers, threatened, on the other hand, the very serious consequence of excluding foreign silks altogether from the British market. This great objection the Duke of Bedford had the sagacity to discover; and accordingly, mainly by his arguments and efforts, the Bill, to the

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 193.

† Lord Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 400.

bitter disappointment of the weavers, was thrown out of the House of Lords.* May 13.

To appeal personally to their Sovereign for redress was now the object of the sufferers, and consequently, on the day after the Bill had been rejected by the Lords, about four thousand "pale and emaciated" creatures presented themselves before the King's Lodge at Richmond, where their sudden appearance and formidable numbers occasioned no slight alarm to the Queen, who happened at the time to be walking in the paddocks. Here they learned that the King had gone to Wimbledon to review some troops, and accordingly thither they proceeded, where they were kindly and graciously listened to by their Sovereign, and, on his dismissing them, returned in a very orderly manner, and apparently much gratified, to London.†

But the following day, whatever may have been the cause, the late peaceful aspect of affairs became entirely changed. In the course of the afternoon a vast concourse of unruly persons, carrying red and black flags, assembled in the neighbourhood of the Houses of Parliament. The members of the House of Commons, as from time to time they made their appearance in Palace Yard, were received with cheers, while the Lords were greeted with hisses and groans. The carriages of many of the Peers were stopped, and among them that of the Lord Chancellor, of whom the mob menacingly enquired whether he had not been an opponent of the recent Bill. The stout and unhesitating manner in which he replied in the affirmative induced his interrogators to alter their tone, and to content themselves with expressing a hope that he would do them

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 154.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 155. Colonel Dalrymple, who saw the poor fellows on their march to Richmond, describes them, in a letter to the Duke of Bedford, as "rather like a parcel of recruits going to their Regiments than a populace following the dictates of rage and passion." *Bedford Correspondence*, vol. iii. p. 283.

justice. "Always," he answered, "and everywhere; and whoever does so need fear nothing."* The King, though followed to the House of Lords by a vast number of half-starved artisans, was treated with marked deference and respect.† The Duke of Bedford, as might have been anticipated, was the principal object of the people's rage. Not only was he hooted and pelted, but one large stone —weighing, as Grenville informs us, five or six pounds— cut him in the hand with which he endeavoured to parry it, and then bruised his temple.‡ On his return to his house in Bloomsbury Square, finding himself still followed by a large body of the rioters, he boldly addressed them from the window of his chariot; at the same time inviting any two of their leaders to accompany him into the house, and there discuss with him their grievances. The invitation was accepted. Two of the rioters followed the Duke into his mansion, and, after having conferred with him for some time, returned to their friends, evidently gratified with his grace's courtesy if not convinced by his arguments.§

Unluckily, the insults offered to the Peers proved but the prelude to worse disorders. For three days London may almost be said to have been in the hands of the mob. During this period the members of the Legislature were again insulted on their way to Westminster; large bodies of men, who had previously been assembled by beat of drum, paraded the streets with their colours flying; on the afternoon of the 16th the standard of the mob was to be seen floating side by side with the royal standard at the entrance to the House of Lords; the windows of persons suspected to be venders of French silks were demolished, and even armourers' shops were broken into and the arms carried

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 155.
† Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 199.
‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 164.
§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 156.

away.* But it was on the Duke of Bedford and his property that the mob was principally bent on venting its fury. During the three days referred to, Bedford House was not only garrisoned with soldiers and subjected to a state of siege, but, at one time so bold was the attitude of the rioters, that while the military were engaged in repelling an attack on the front of the mansion, another detachment of the rabble very nearly succeeded in effecting an entrance at its rear. Even so late as Sunday the 19th, when order had, comparatively speaking, been restored, and when Bedford House was thronged with the great and the fashionable who came to condole with the Duke and Duchess, we find a large number of idlers and ill-disposed persons still surrounding the gates, and occasionally resorting to acts of outrage. The glass of Lady Grosvenor's coach, for instance, was broken, and the windows of Lady Cork's chair completely demolished.† "I hope," writes the Duke of Bedford to the Duke of Marlborough, "that all is now partly subsided, though I am yet obliged to keep garrison here with an hundred Infantry and thirty-six Cavalry; and, it being Sunday night, the concourse of people is still very great though not very dangerous; it consisting chiefly of such as mere curiosity has brought here."‡ Walpole, who was one of those who had hastened to wait upon the Duke and Duchess, has left us a graphic sketch of his visit. "I found," he says, "the Square crowded, but chiefly with persons led by curiosity. As my chariot had no coronets, I was received with huzzas; but when the horses turned to enter the court, dirt and stones were thrown at it. When the gates opened, I was surprised with the most

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 168, 169. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 156, 157. Annual Register for 1765, pp. 41, 42.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 364.

‡ Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 279. "Let them be a mob or any other demonstration," writes Colonel Dalrymple to the Duke, "they are dangerous weapons when directed against any individual." *Ibid.*, p. 283.

martial appearance. The Horse Guards were drawn up in the Court, and many officers and gentlemen were walking about as on the platform of a regular citadel. The whole house was open, and knots of the same kind were in every room."* In a letter to the Earl of Hertford, Walpole gives a nearly similar account of his visit. "There is," he adds, "such a general spirit of mutiny and dissatisfaction in the lower people, that I think we are in danger of a rebellion in the heart of the capital in a week."† Walpole's fears of a rebellion fortunately were unfounded. A large public subscription, which was raised for the suffering artisans—added to a guarantee on the part of the master-weavers to revoke the orders which they had given for foreign silks—went far to arrest the progress of the tumults.

But it was to the promptitude and decision of the King, that society was mainly indebted for the restoration of order and the prevention of bloodshed. For instance, at one time we find him giving directions for a regiment at
May 20. Chatham to advance nearer to London, and at another time writing to the Duke of Cumberland to be ready at a moment's notice to take command of the troops as Captain General. "I have sent this," he writes to his uncle, "to one who has my orders not to deliver it to any one but yourself, and to bring an immediate answer, and also your opinion when and how soon we can meet; for if any disturbance arises in the night, I should think the hour proposed
May 21. for tomorrow too late."‡ On the following day we find the King at St. James's, seemingly, in Grenville's language, "in great disorder and agitation." He was hurt, he told his Minister, that people should think he had kept out of the way from fear. He was ready "to put himself

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 157–8.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 364.

‡ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 208, 209. See also the Quarterly Review, vol. xc. p. 525.

at the head of his army, or do anything to save his country."*

That these, and other popular tumults which disgraced the earlier period of the reign of George the Third, were fomented by men of high rank and powerful political influence, little doubt seems to exist. "What"—was the significant observation of that veteran trafficker in agitation, Lord Holland, in allusion to the Weavers' riots—"What might not an artful man do with these mobs!"† The present riots, in the opinion of Walpole, had been "blown-up" by the friends of Wilkes; while the Duchess of Bedford, on the contrary, insisted "with warmth and acrimony" to Walpole, that the real culprit was Bute.‡ So also thought the Duke of Bedford; who even went so far as to prefer a charge against that nobleman to the King to this effect—a charge as unjust as it was preposterous. A mob, as Walpole shrewdly observes, was a kind of edged tool which so detested a public character as Bute was not very likely to summon to his assistance. The Duke, however, as we learn from the high authority of his colleague, Grenville, persisted in pressing his convictions upon his incredulous Sovereign "with terms of reproach to Lord Bute for his perfidy."§

We have now brought to its close our summary of the causes of the King's obvious unhappiness, as well as his reasons for endeavouring to get rid of an Administration that seems to have been scarcely less unpopular with his subjects, than it was obnoxious to himself. We have seen also how signal had been his discomfiture; how complete had been the triumph of his tyrants; and how painful consequently had been his mortification. "The King," writes

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 177.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 167.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 158.
§ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 171.

Walpole—"insulted and prisoner, his mother stigmatized, his Favourite persecuted—it is again a scene of Bohuns, Montforts, and Plantagenets."* "The King," swore Bedford's creature, Rigby, "shall not be allowed to appoint one of his own footmen."† Means of escape, indeed, the King had at hand, but those means, in his opinion, were fraught with humiliation if not with disgrace. It will be remembered how great had been his exultation when he emancipated himself from the thraldom of the great Whig magnates; how loud had been the vaunt of the courtiers that their royal master was now a King indeed; how boastfully they had proclaimed that the Crown would never again be enslaved by an insolent Cabal. Yet so helpless now was the King's condition, and so deep his distress, as to impel him to turn his thoughts once more towards the powerful and arrogant party which he had found in office at the time of his accession. It will be remembered how harsh and impolitic had been the King's treatment of the Duke of Devonshire; how summary had been his Grace's dismissal from the Lord Chamberlainship, and the erasure of his name from the books of the Council Office.‡ Had the Duke been still living, the advice and influence of so upright and highminded a nobleman might have proved of the utmost service to the King, in this his hour of necessity. But the tomb had closed over the princely Devonshire in the prime of his days: his power and his titles had been transmitted to his son, a youth in his seventeenth year. To conciliate the powerful house of Cavendish was of course of considerable importance to the Court. Not only had the present Duke three uncles in the House of Commons, but two of them were persons of talent and political weight. The King there-

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 371.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 176, *note*.
‡ See *ante*, p. 143-5.

fore was induced to express his regret for what had passed, and to invite the noble boy to St. James's. Thither accordingly he went, accompanied by his uncles; doubtless to be received by the King with marked consideration and kindness.*

Such a procedure as this, combined with the King's unconcealed dislike for his present Ministers, could scarcely fail to excite their high displeasure, and consequently it was determined to bring him a second time to account. By June. this time the Parliamentary Session was at an end; the Duke of Bedford was in a hurry to set off for Woburn; Grenville had fixed upon the 15th as the day of his departure for Wotton; wherefore little time was to be lost in coming to an understanding with their royal master. The person, deputed by the Cabinet to be their spokesman on the occasion, was the Duke of Bedford, who, having introduced himself into the royal closet, at once commenced June 12. one of those long and dictatorial lectures which were the King's especial abhorrence. He was going into the country for a fortnight, he told the King, perhaps for three weeks, perhaps for a month, and if upon his return he and his colleagues were not received "with greater expressions of favour and confidence" they were resolved to resign their offices. The King replied in language equally haughty. As for confidence, he said, he had extended to them as much as was requisite for the despatch of public business, and, "as to favour, they had not taken the way to merit it."† If Junius—who wrote under the impression that the Duke's remonstrance was a written one—is to be credited, the Duke reproached the King "in plain terms with his duplicity, baseness, falsehood, treachery, and hypocrisy; repeatedly gave him the lie and left him in con-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 181.

† MS. Diary of Sir Gilbert Elliot, quoted in the *Bedford Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 290. Sir Gilbert in all probability received this account from the King himself.

vulsions." * Walpole's account differs in no material degree from that of Junius. "The King had the greatest difficulty to command himself enough to hear it read to the end. It tended to give him a month to consider whether he would take a new Ministry or retain the old. In the latter case he was told he must smile upon his Ministers, and frown on their adversaries, whom he was reproached in no light terms with having countenanced, contrary to his promise. Invectives against the Princess were not spared, nor threats of bringing Lord Bute to the block. The King made no answer, but made a bow as a signal for them to retire." † If, said the King when the Duke had gone, he had not broken out into a most profuse perspiration, his indignation would have suffocated him. ‡

The justice of the charges, thus brought against the Duke of Bedford, has occasionally been disputed. That, on the one hand, the account of Junius is greatly exaggerated, and that of Walpole overcoloured, there seems to be little question. But, on the other hand, that the Duke of Bedford made use of language to his Sovereign, which

* Junius's Letter to the Duke of Bedford of 19 September 1769, *note*.

† Walpole, in using the word "them," wrote under the double and erroneous impression that Grenville, Sandwich, and Halifax accompanied the Duke of Bedford into the royal closet, and further that the remonstrance to which the King was compelled to listen was not a verbal but a written one. Lord Macaulay also writes, (*Essays*, vol. iii. pp. 588–9, 10th Edition), "*Grenville and Bedford* demanded an audience of him and *read him a remonstrance of many pages* which they had drawn up with great care." Notwithstanding, however, these high authorities, the Duke of Bedford certainly seems to have been the only person closeted with the King; indeed Grenville, in his Diary expresaly intimates that when he "went in" to the King it was *after* the Duke had quitted the royal presence. *Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 194–5. Walpole also, in a letter written by him at the time, seems to contradict the statement made by him in his Memoirs of George 3, viz.—"that Grenville, Sandwich, and Halifax accompanied" the Duke. "This day fortnight,"—he writes—"the Duke of Bedford, *in the name* of himself and his three colleagues *prescribed* to his Majesty," &c. It may be further mentioned that there is no trace among the archives at Woburn of any such document as is referred to severally by Walpole and Lord Macaulay. *Walpole's Memoirs of George* 3, vol. ii. p. 183, *note by Sir Denis Le Marchant*.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 182–3.

would have been regarded as in the highest degree offensive had it been applied by one private gentleman to another, seems to be equally certain. Take, for instance, the charges of perfidy and falsehood which we find him bringing against his Sovereign, in regard to the asserted continuance of the King's political connexion with Lord Bute. Only three weeks, it must be remembered, had passed, since the King had entered into a solemn compact with his Ministers neither directly nor indirectly to consult with his early friend and adviser, yet, without the slightest apparent reason, we now find the Duke of Bedford cruelly and audaciously enquiring of his royal master whether—to use the Duke's own words—"this promise had been kept?" It was in vain that the King assured him that his royal word had been faithfully adhered to—that Bute had been in no way consulted—and that, so far from that nobleman having done the Duke any ill offices, he had on the contrary "always spoken of him with great regard." "I proceeded," writes the Duke to the Duke of Marlborough, "to beseech him to permit his authority and his favour and countenance to go together; and, if the last cannot be given to his present Ministers, to transfer to others that authority which must be useless in their hands, unless strengthened by the former." Bute, on this occasion, appears to have been contemptuously spoken of by the Duke as "this favourite" and his continued "pernicious advice," according to Grenville's account, very offensively commented upon.* The only wonder is, that the King, instead of listening "civilly and temperately" to the Duke—which Grenville, on his Grace's authority, informs us was the case—should not have ordered the page in attendance to turn him out of the closet. George the Second, ac- May 22.

* Bedford Correspondence, vol. iii. pp. 286, 287; Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 194.

cording to Lord Macaulay, would have been provoked to kick him out of the room.* Neither was this the first occasion on which Bedford had taxed his Sovereign with telling a falsehood. "I took the liberty," writes his Grace on the 19th of May, "to remind the King upon what conditions proposed by himself — namely the excluding Lord Bute from his presence and any participation in public affairs—I was called by him into his service, and *how very unfaithfully these conditions had been kept with me.*" †

As had happened on a late occasion, the King in his distress turned all his thoughts towards Pitt. Accordingly on Monday, the 17th of June, the Duke of Grafton, by the King's orders, set off for Hayes to negotiate with the "Great Commoner" and to invite him to Court in the event of his finding him willing to undertake the formation of a new Ministry. Pitt, as usual, hesitated and coquetted, but subsequently expressed his readiness to wait upon his Sovereign, merely preferring a humble request that, in consideration of his lameness, his Majesty would be graciously pleased to receive him in an apartment on the basement floor of the palace. ‡

The appointed interview between the King and Pitt took place on the 19th of June, at Buckingham House, and lasted for three hours and a quarter. The principal conditions required by Pitt were the appointments of Lord Temple to be First Lord of the Treasury, and of the Duke of Grafton and himself to be Secretaries of State. These and other demands were cheerfully acceded to by the King, and thus, when Pitt made his parting bow to his Sovereign, appearances wore every promise of success.

In the mean time, Ministers, confiding in their strength

* Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 568. Ed. 1860.
† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 280. See also the Quarterly Review, vol. xc. p. 526.
‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 186.

in the House of Commons, and satisfied that the King was secure in their meshes, had retired for a time from the scene of their labours. The Duke of Bedford was at Woburn; Grenville was a guest of his brother Lord Temple, at Stow; Halifax was also in the country. Sandwich, however, was still in London, when the startling intelligence was communicated to him that the King and Pitt had just been closeted together. "The King," he writes to Grenville, "did not come to St. James's till near two o'clock. Upon inquiry I found the occasion of this unusual delay was that Mr. Pitt was actually at that time at the Queen's House, where he had been for near two hours." * Sandwich's letter contains a pressing exhortation to Grenville to hasten back to London, but the latter had his reasons for remaining in the country. "When I took leave of the King," he replies to Sandwich, "I asked his permission to stay in the country till Tuesday next, which he granted to me. My return to town before that time, uncalled for, will have the appearance of a desire to embarrass the arrangement which he is now endeavouring to form, and which I need not tell you will come on, or go off, just the same whether I am there or not; as the King would not in the present situation communicate it to me, and, without that, I certainly should not trouble him on the subject." † The result of a second interview between the King and Pitt, which took place on the 22nd, was a summons from the latter to Temple to attend the King on the Tuesday following. "Let me, my dear Lord," writes Pitt to him, "express my own most earnest desire that you will be so good to set out tomorrow morning, and, if I may beg the favour, that you will come and take a bed at Hayes the same night. I am just returning to that place, finding it quite necessary to sleep in the country." Pitt described the King's manner to him as having been most gracious. "I will only say" he

June 19.

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 53. † *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6.

continues to write, "that things have advanced considerably in the audience of this day. The first audience was, as this, infinitely gracious, but not equally material. Upon the whole, I augur much good, as far as intentions go; and I am indeed touched with the manner and *royal frankness* which I had the happiness to find." * Accordingly, on Tuesday, the 25th, Temple, having passed the preceding night at Hayes, repaired to Buckingham House, where, at ten o'clock in the morning, he was ushered into the royal presence. Pitt had previously intimated to him that, unless assured of his co-operation and support, it was his fixed determination to reject office, so that the impracticable Peer was only too well aware of his personal importance at this momentous crisis. To the great mortification of the King, the Earl, in very mysterious language, declined the high post which was offered to him. His motives are to this day inexplicable. "He had a delicacy," he told the King, "which must always remain a secret." In vain the King urged him to re-consider his decision; in vain, after he had quitted the royal closet, the Duke of Grafton told him that he "would forfeit all character" if he refused; in vain his friend, George Onslow, implored him "for the sake of his country, for the sake of us all," to accept the Treasury. Temple was inexorable.† To his brother George, with whom in the course of the day he had an affectionate interview, he spoke the same mysterious language which he had used in the Closet. In addition, he said, to the great difficulty of managing the House of Commons, he had another reason "of a tender and delicate nature" which he must decline to explain.‡ The motive could scarcely have been an unwillingness to supplant his brother George, inas-

* Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 61.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 187. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 63, 65, *note*. Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 378. Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 298–9.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 201.

much as Charles Townshend expressly assures us that "there would have been *no* difficulty" in that quarter.* "Lord Temple," writes Lord Chesterfield to his son, "positively refused. There was evidently some trick in it, but what, is past my conjecturing: *Davus sum, non Œdipus.*" †

As regards the conduct of Mr. Pitt during the negotiation, we have the high authority of the Duke of Cumberland, that he entered "most thoroughly and heartily" into the King's views.‡ There is, moreover, a mass of evidence to prove how deep was the pain and disappointment with which he witnessed its failure. The negotiation, writes Charles Townshend, was broken off "against Mr. Pitt's judgment, declaration, and most earnest remonstrance." § At one time we find Pitt speaking of Temple's secession as an "amputation;" || and at another writing to Lord Lyttelton that this crisis of his life was "the most July 1. difficult and painful on all accounts, that he had yet experienced." ¶

Pitt has been severely censured for not having attempted to form an administration at all hazards, yet the reason which he set forth to the King for withholding his services on this occasion would seem to be sufficiently satisfactory. His health, he said, was such that, without the support of his powerful relations, it would be hopeless to attempt the formation of a vigorous administration. To Thomas Townshend he held the same language. Had he been younger, he said, or had he a single friend to whom he could have entrusted the Treasury, he would not have

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii., pp. 65-7, *note*.
† Lord Chesterfield's Letters, edited by Earl Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 402.
‡ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 213, 214.
§ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 65.
|| Walpole's George 3, vol. ii. p. 191.
¶ Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 316.

shrunk from the task, notwithstanding the defection of Temple.* To Lady Stanhope he writes on the 20th of July;—"All is now over as to me, and by a fatality I did not expect. I mean Lord Temple's refusing to take his share with me in the undertaking. We set out to-morrow morning for Somersetshire,† where I propose, if I find the place tolerable, to pass not a little of the rest of my days." ‡

Never, hitherto, during the King's short but troubled reign, had his affairs been in a more critical state. "In what distress," writes Charles Townshend, "is the King; in what confusion are these kingdoms!" § In this fresh emergency, the King again applied to his uncle the Duke of Cumberland for his assistance and advice. The Duke's conduct, when thus a second time appealed to, proved to be no less noble and disinterested than it had been on the former occasion. "I can oppose the Crown," he said, "when Ministers do wrong, but will support it when now it is insulted." ‖ His first appeal was to the Opposition Whigs; but the death of some, and the defection of others, had sadly thinned the ranks of that once formidable party. Some of them, moreover, objected that any Administration unsupported by Pitt must speedily fall to pieces; some were too old, and the majority too young and inexperienced, to render their services of due value to the State. It was a pleasantry at the time that the King must necessarily continue Grenville as his Minister, there being no other person in a tye-wig to preside at the Treasury Board. Fortunately, however, there was one individual, the Duke of Newcastle, who not only still retained a powerful influ-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 191.
† To his seat at Burton Pynsent.
‡ Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. v. pp. 163—4.
§ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 66, *note*.
‖ Walpole'Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 177, 181.

ence over the Whig party, but whose love for patronage and power still continued unchilled by years and neglect, and accordingly, by the united exertions of the two Dukes, the well-known Rockingham Administration was in time constructed. The Marquis of Rockingham was placed at the head of the Treasury; the Duke of Grafton and General Conway were appointed Secretaries of State; William Dowdeswell, a country gentleman of respectable talents and inflexible integrity, was selected to be Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Northington was continued as Lord Chancellor, and Lord Egmont as First Lord of the Admiralty. The Earl of Winchelsea, although in his seventy-seventh year, was appointed President of the Council, and the Duke of Newcastle, who was not much his junior, Lord Privy Seal. It was not without a pang that the veteran Duke relinquished his claim to the Treasury.* He was appeased, however, by being allowed to dispense the patronage of the Church, which, for the first and last time, was attached to the Office of Privy Seal. If, as is most probable, the treatment which he experienced from the Bench of Bishops, when driven from Office in 1762, still rankled in his mind, it must have been not a little soothing to his pride, to be thus able to re-exhibit himself to the ingrate magnates of the Church, vested with all his former authority, either to withhold or to bestow.

Grenville, in the mean time—buoyed up by very exaggerated conceptions of his own importance and talents, and having had his position strengthened by his reconciliation with his brother Temple—had remained almost to the last moment under the delusion that his services were indispensable to his Sovereign. The flattery or partiality of his friends and followers tended to confirm him in this persuasion. Not a day, he tells us, passed, but he received

* Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs; Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 165, *note*.

communications from "a great variety of persons," expressive of their indignation at the ill-treatment which he had experienced.* The Lord Chancellor, he says, told him the "kingdom was lost" if he retired. Lord Mansfield, he adds, expressed himself in similar terms. Lord Holland, on the other hand, writes to George Selwyn on the 4th of August; —"The excessive self-conceit of Grenville, that could make his writers call him—if he did not write it himself—the greatest minister this country ever saw, as well as his pride and obstinacy, established him. It did not hurt him that he had a better opinion of himself than he, or perhaps anybody else, ever deserved. On the contrary, it helped him. But when the fool said upon that—'the King cannot do without me,' *hoc nocuit.*" † The length of time which was allowed to elapse, without his being recalled to the palace, was attributed by him to the King's unwillingness to compromise his dignity, or rather, to use his own expression, to a natural "unwillingness to speak first." In the opinion of his colleague, Lord Egmont, a "gentle behaviour" on the part of Ministers would set all to rights.‡ Still no summons came from the King, and Grenville was probably beginning to feel somewhat uneasy, when the following peremptory note was placed in his hands.

The Lord Chancellor to Mr. Grenville.

"Wednesday, July 10, 1765.

"Dear Sir,

"I have this moment received His Majesty's commands to signify to you his pleasure, that you attend His Majesty at St. James's this day, at 12 o'clock, with the seal of your office.

"I am very unhappy at conveying so unpleasing commands, as I have the honour to be with great respect, &c.,

"Northington." §

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 304.
† Selwyn Corresp., vol. i. p. 389.
‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 204.
§ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 71.

No less laconic was the letter of dismissal received by the Duke of Bedford:—

The Duke of Grafton to the Duke of Bedford.

"Whitehall, July 10, 1765.

"My Lord,

"The King, after having done me the honour of conferring on me the Seals of Secretary of State, commanded me to acquaint your Grace that he had no further occasion of your services as Lord President of his Council.

"I am really grieved that the disagreeable lot should fall on me to communicate it to your Grace, as I have the honour to be

"With the most unfeigned respect, &c.,

"Grafton."*

Grenville has himself bequeathed us an account of his farewell interview with his royal master. To the ex-Minister's natural and energetic request to be informed in what manner he had incurred his Majesty's displeasure, the King returned a curt and apparently haughty reply. Too much "constraint," he said, had been put upon him by his late Ministers, who, instead of asking his advice, had expected him to "*obey*." Grenville, as he himself informs us, "started at that word." During the parting harangue delivered by the fallen Minister—which, by-the-bye, seems to have been a more than usually verbose and lengthy one—the King listened to him with exemplary patience and marked civility. Yet neither in the closet, nor at the levee which the King held in the course of the afternoon, could Grenville elicit from his Sovereign a single farewell word of approbation. At the levee, he says, the King asked him but "one cold question."† July 10.

Grenville, as may readily be imagined, was impressed with the full conviction that Bute had been the secret

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 311.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 211–217.

adviser and author of his fall.* The Duke of Bedford was apparently of the same opinion. To Grenville, for instance, his Grace writes on the 8th of July—"I can hardly bring myself to believe that any people will be hardy enough to undertake an Administration, which is constructed on no better foundation than the support of Lord Bute's favouritism."† His creature Rigby echoes the words of his patron. "The Duke of Cumberland's political system," he writes, "grafted upon the Earl of Bute's stock, seems of all others the least capable of succeeding."‡ On the other hand, more than one discomfited member of the late Government ascribed the downfall of their party mainly to the enmity which existed between the Princess Dowager and the Duchess of Bedford. These gentlemen, wittily observed George Selwyn, put him in mind of thieves, who, "when on their way to execution, always assign their ruin to bad women."§

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 215. The King assured Grenville at their farewell interview that Lord Bute had "had no hand in advising the present change."—*Ibid.*

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 70.

‡ Walpole's Corresp., vol. v. p. 43, *note.*

§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 208.

CHAPTER XVI.

Marquis of Rockingham, Premier—Death of the Duke of Cumberland—Unhappy married life of the Duchess of Brunswick (Princess Augusta)—Ministerial jealousy of the influence of Lord Bute—Arrival of alarming intelligence from North America—First symptoms of Revolutionary feeling—Diminution of Colonial Trade—Debates in Parliament—The "Declaratory Act"—Repeal of the Stamp Act.

THE members of the new Government kissed hands on the 10th of July, the same day on which Grenville delivered up the Seals to the King. The Rockingham Administration, even at its outset, presented but an indifferent prospect of stability. It was composed, for the most part; of an undisciplined force, deficient alike in Parliamentary influence, in oratorical skill, in official experience, and administrative abilities. In addition to these difficulties, there lay before them the disheartening prospect of having to contend against the powerful Bedford and Grenville parties; against the underground intrigues and dangerous popularity of Temple, and, not impossibly, the open hostility, and the crushing eloquence of Pitt. Scarcely, indeed, could the undertaking appear more hopeless to others, than to the new Ministers and to their friends. Lord Rockingham, conscious of his own shortcomings, freely admitted the weakness of his position. Conway spoke of the attempt as a "perilous one." Walpole thought it a "wild proposal;" Lord Mansfield denounced it as madness and desperation.*

* Walpole's George 3, vol. ii. p. 190. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 208.

"It was a mere lute-string administration," said Charles Townshend—"pretty summer wear, but it would never stand the winter." Lord Chesterfield also writes to his son—"It is an heterogeneous jumble of youth and caducity, which cannot be efficient."* If the new Ministers, however, were deficient in experience and in abilities of a high order, they possessed, on the other hand, the advantages of birth, fortune, and clear judgment. They were united, moreover, by the bonds of mutual esteem. They were agreed on the capital political questions of the day. Their intentions were pure, and their reputations stainless.

The chief of this respectable phalanx, Charles Marquis of Rockingham, had, previously to his having been called upon to fill the high office of First Minister of the Crown, held no more responsible a post than that of a Lord of the Bedchamber. He was the son of a country gentleman of the name of Watson, who, on the demise of a kinsman, had succeeded to the Barony of Rockingham. On the female side, however, he was descended from the celebrated Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, whose noble estates had passed into his possession, and whose more aristocratic and euphonious name he had adopted. The father of the Marquis had allied himself to the fortunes of Sir Robert Walpole, by whom he had been repaid, for his political partisanship and personal attachment, with no niggard liberality. During the twenty years that Walpole was at the head of the Treasury, honours were showered on him with almost unexampled rapidity. He became a Knight of the Bath, Lord-Lieutenant of the county of York, Baron of Waith, Viscount Higham, Earl of Malton, and, lastly, Marquis of Rockingham. "I suppose," was the good-natured remark of Sir Robert Walpole, "that we shall soon see our

* Lord Chesterfield's Letters, vol. iv. p. 403. Edited by Earl Stanhope.

friend Malton in opposition, for he has had no promotion in the peerage for the last fortnight."

With the titles and splendid domain of his father, Lord Rockingham inherited also the Whig principles of his family, evidence of which he afforded, in a somewhat romantic manner, when only in his sixteenth year. He was an Eton boy, at home for the Christmas holydays, when the news reached Wentworth House that the Duke of Cumberland was in full march to give battle to Charles Edward and the Highland Clans. The young Lord was seized with so irresistible a desire to display his loyalty and valour, that, having enlisted a faithful groom into his service, he quitted Wentworth early one morning on pretence of hunting, and at the first favourable opportunity directed his horse's head towards the North. The earliest tidings of the missing heir, which were received by his relatives, were contained in a letter from himself dated from the Camp at Carlisle.*

Lord Rockingham, at the period when he was appointed First Lord of the Treasury, was in his thirty-sixth year. Attached to the pursuits and amusements of private life, it was with no feigned reluctance that he was induced to accept that high and responsible post. Hitherto he had been chiefly known to his fellow-countrymen on account of the large sums of money which he was in the habit of betting on horse-races, and as a munificent patron of the Turf. The Duke of Cumberland, however, had discovered in him higher qualities than the world had yet given him credit for, whence his Royal Highness had not only prevailed upon the King to offer him the Premiership, but, by his arguments and entreaties, induced the Marquis to surmount his aversion for office. In his own opinion, Lord Rockingham told the Duke, he should be much better able to serve his Sovereign, if allowed to remain in a private and independent

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p, 138.

position; but, he added, that if his friends thought otherwise, he was willing to sacrifice his inclinations to his duty, and to serve in any capacity which might be most for the advantage of the State.*

The King, like the rest of the world, appears to have entertained but a mean opinion of Lord Rockingham's qualifications for filling high office. "I thought," he said on one occasion, "that I had not two men in my Bedchamber of less parts than Lord Rockingham."† Much of this want of appreciation of his abilities was doubtless attributable to his timid and embarrassed manner of speaking in Parliament. To the close of his life he never rose to address the House of Lords without a nervous feeling of distress. Once, while he was wincing under the merciless raillery of Lord Sandwich, Lord Gower is said to have slily whispered to the latter—"Sandwich, how could you worry the poor dumb thing so!" ‡ Again, on another occasion, we find the King writing to his First Minister—"I am much pleased that Opposition has forced you to hear your own voice, which I hope will encourage you to stand forth in other debates."§

But if Lord Rockingham, as a Minister, laboured under many difficulties, he enjoyed, on the other hand, numerous advantages, derivable from high birth, from the possession of a princely fortune, from sound sense, from a vigorous understanding, and a high reputation for private virtue. He was superior to all duplicity; his political integrity was beyond all suspicion; even his enemies admitted that he held the interests of his country deeply at heart; and, lastly, he was gifted with a power of ac-

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 192, 197. "Like Godolphin, he loved gaming; and his singular wager with Lord Orford on a race between two geese at Newmarket has been recorded by Horace Walpole; but he overcame this propensity on entering public life." *Bedford Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 307, *note by Earl Russell.*

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 291.

‡ Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 167.

§ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 271.

quiring the affection and confidence of others, which, during long years of adverse fortune, enabled him to secure, politically as well as personally, the devoted adhesion of the party who recognized him as their chief. Burke has done Lord Rockingham nothing more than justice, when he dwells on the "sound principles, enlarged mind, clear and sagacious sense, and unbroken fortitude" of his early patron.* "Surely," writes Philip Thicknesse, who knew him well, "if there ever lived a truly good man the Marquis of Rockingham was such."†

From the two new Secretaries of State—the Duke of Grafton and General Conway—‡ Lord Rockingham received zealous, but certainly not too efficient aid. The former, from his love of pleasure and country pursuits, and the latter from constitutional irresolution, had been almost as averse to accepting office as their leader himself. Moreover, there were two other prominent members of the Administration, the Duke of Newcastle and Charles Townshend, who, the one from timidity, and the other from versatility and eccentricity of character, threatened to be sources of embarrassment, rather than of strength, to the Government. So long, indeed, as the Ministry enjoyed the powerful support of the Duke of Cumberland, the King's affairs were carried on with tolerable success. The high respect with which the Duke was regarded by the public, his experienced sagacity and vigorous counsels, the credit which he had of late obtained with the King, and the familiar access, which his exalted rank afforded him to the royal ear, contributed, so long as his life was spared, to animate and invigorate the Administration which he had been the

* Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 134. † Thicknesse's Memoirs, p. 105.

‡ The Hon. Henry Seymour Conway was the second son of Francis, first Baron Conway, and brother to Francis, first Marquis of Hertford. After having served with reputation in his military capacity, and filled the high offices of Secretary of State and Commander in Chief of the Army, he died a Field Marshal, July 9, 1795, at the age of seventy-five.

means of calling into existence. Scarcely four months, however, had elapsed since its formation, ere death deprived the Government of its patron and mainstay. Notwithstanding his former unpopularity, the people of England united with Ministers in lamenting the irreparable loss which they had each sustained. It was a notable fact that not only did the middle, and even the lower classes, put on mourning on the occasion; but that they wore it for a longer period than was enjoined by the London Gazette. Party feeling alone was backward in doing honour to the dead. "The Duchess of Bedford, then at Bath," writes Walpole, "distinguished her animosity by wearing slighter mourning for the Duke than that prescribed by the Court." *

The Duke of Cumberland expired at his house in Upper Grosvenor Street, on the 31st October, 1765, in the forty-fifth year of his age. A series of cruel disappointments, and a load of bodily afflictions, still more grievous, had for some years rendered him indifferent to life. "I should fear," wrote Charles Townshend three weeks previously to the Duke's death, "that his Royal Highness will not be long among us. His friends die so fast, I doubt whether his great spirit will not soon almost wish to be enlarged from a world which, to a man of habitual ill-health, can have so few satisfactions." † The Duke might have applied to himself the words which Sir Robert Cecil addressed in his last illness to Sir Walter Coke — "Ease and Pleasure quake to hear of death; but my life, full of cares and miseries, desireth to be dissolved." On the evening previous to his death he was playing at piquet with his old servant and friend, General Hodgson, who had fought by his side at the battle of Culloden, when the lookers-on observed that his manner grew confused, and that he seemed forgetful of the cards. On the following day, however, he was well

Oct. 11.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 226, 227. † MS. original.

enough to make his appearance at Court, as well as to dine with Lord Albemarle and to drink tea with his niece, the Duchess of Brunswick. It was not till his return to Grosvenor Street that any alarming symptom betrayed itself. Then, while alone with his servant, he complained of a feeling of suffocation, and of a strange sensation in one of his hands, at the same time desiring that a window should be opened. The servant, perceiving that his master changed colour, led him by the hand to the sofa, and suggested the propriety of sending for the Duke's medical attendant, Sir Clifton Wintringham,* to which the Duke replied, "Not yet." His *valet-de-chambre*, who was accustomed to bleed him, was then summoned, and was proceeding to open a vein, when the Duke exclaimed—"It is too late!—It is all over!"—and immediately sank back, insensible. Before his old friend, Lord Albemarle, could arrive from his house in Arlington Street, the great heart was still, and the body cold. The King, to show his respect for his uncle's memory, gracefully conferred upon Lord Albemarle the Garter vacated by the death of his master.†

The allusion to the Duchess of Brunswick, in the foregoing paragraph, reminds us of the fair Princess who, eighteen months previously, had sailed as a bride from the shores of England, and who was now a visitor in her native land. Unhappily, during that interval she had endured all the distress contingent on the infidelities of a dissolute husband, and an alien and uncomfortable home. "Their palace

* Sir Clifton Wintringham, Baronet, Chief Physician to the Duke of Cumberland and afterwards to George 3, was born in 1710 and received his education at Trinity College Cambridge. His death took place at his house at Hammersmith on the 9th of January 1794. He was the author of several works on medical subjects. There is an account of Sir Clifton Wintringham in Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century*, vol. ii. p. 34, *note*.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 105. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 223, 226. George, third Earl of Albemarle had been aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cumberland at the battle of Fontenoy as well as at Culloden. His death took place on the 13th of October, 1772, only five months after the birth of his heir, William the fourth Earl.

at Brunswick," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "is a miserable wooden house poorly furnished, and Brunswick one of the worst towns even in Germany." * Thirty years afterwards, we find the Duchess talking to Lord Malmesbury of her husband's amours at this early period of their marriage, and of the pain which they had occasioned her. "She knew it all;" she said; "it made her uneasy, but she held her tongue." † "All we have heard," writes Rigby, "of their living very ill together is true, except that of his outward behaviour to her, which is respectful and full of attention. At the *bal masqué* at Brunswick he dances, at the Opera House, with the Opera girls before her face, and makes no scruple of all kinds of infidelities." Under these circumstances the Duchess, as may readily be imagined, seized the first opportunity of passing a few months in quiet with her own family, and in her own country. "This morning," writes Rigby, on the 8th of September, "Harry St. John ‡ came to breakfast with me, having left his master and the Brunswicks turning into Harwich harbour. They passed by in the Duke of York's post-coach, between nine and ten; his Majesty's coaches coming no further than Romford to meet them. Harry tells me nothing was ever equal to the joy she is in at coming hither, which she did not attempt to disguise at home, for at Brunswick she told them all she hoped she should die in England." § Nearly half a century afterwards this melancholy wish was gratified.

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 318.

† Lord Malmesbury's Diaries, vol. iii. p. 191. 2nd Edition.

‡ The Hon. Henry St. John, brother of Frederick second Viscount Bolingbroke, was Groom of the Bedchamber to Edward Duke of York and afterwards to the King. It would seem by Lord Malmesbury's Diaries, (vol. iii. p. 191,) that the Duke of Brunswick was at this period in love with the celebrated Lady Diana Beauclerk. There are some pleasing letters of "Harry St. John" among the Selwyn Correspondence where he is somewhat irreverently nicknamed by his friends "the Baptist." Horace Walpole somewhere speaks of Lord Bolingbroke and his brother Henry as "Lord Corydon and Captain Corydon." The latter afterwards sat in the House of Commons as Member for Wotton Basset, and rose to be a General in the Army. His death took place August 31, 1771.

§ Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 318.

In the mean time, although, on more than one point, the political opinions of the new Ministers differed very materially from those of the King, there can be no doubt that, when he called them to his counsels, it was with the determination to extend to them his fullest confidence and support. Delighted at his emancipation from the tyranny of the Duke of Bedford and Grenville, the King wisely yielded to every demand made upon him by their successors, while Ministers, on their part, prudently refrained from attempting to impose too harsh conditions on their Sovereign. On one point only —and unhappily it was a sore one with the King—they were so imprudent as to make an exception. Willing, as they afterwards showed themselves, to court the aid and support of Lord Bute and his friends, they at this period entertained feelings of jealousy towards that nobleman, scarcely less intense than those which had formerly tortured the suspicious minds of their predecessors. Thus, at a great meeting which was held at the house of the Duke of Newcastle, preparatory to their accepting office, we find it *unanimously* resolved that absolute proof must be given to the world that, neither "directly nor indirectly, should Lord Bute have any concern or influence in public affairs," and that, without such proof being given, it would be useless to endeavour to form an Administration. No fewer than eighteen "Lords and Gentlemen" agreed to this remarkable resolution.* Accordingly, the King was again subjected to the same suspicions, and compelled to repeat the same promises, which had been inflicted upon him by the Bedford and Grenville section of the Whig party. The Earl of Northumberland, instrumental though he had been in turning out the late Ministers, was excluded from office merely because he was the son-in-law of Bute; and, lastly, although the restoration of Mr. Stuart Mackenzie

June 30

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 218. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 207.

would have been alike a graceful concession to the King's feelings, and nothing more than an act of justice due to Mr. Mackenzie himself, Ministers, probably from fear of losing credit with the public, withheld the boon. In vain Walpole urged upon his relative, General Conway, the justice and policy of the measure. "To talk to Conway," he writes, "against public opinion, was preaching to the winds." *

In the mean time, the attention, not only of the Government, but of the whole nation, had been engrossed by the startling news which had of late continued to arrive from America. The MS. despatches, addressed by the Naval Commander in Chief in America—Rear Admiral Lord Colville—to the Lords of the Admiralty, are filled with alarming particulars. For instance, in one despatch it is intimated that unless the Stamps for Rhode Island are put on board
Sept. 21. the "Cygnet," vessel of war, there is every prospect of their being burned by the inhabitants. Governor Bernard
Nov. 7. writes to his lordship that such is the "increasing licentiousness" of the people of Massachusetts, he fears it will "oblige him to quit his Government." The Governor of
Nov. 7. New Jersey requests that the Stamps, on their arrival, may be lodged on board ships of war till he is able to take measures for their security. When the "Sardoine" sloop of war—in convoy of the stamps for Pennsylvania and Mary-
Nov. 23. land—enters the harbour of Philadelphia, she discovers "all the vessels in it having their ensigns hoisted either half-mast up, or spread in the topmast shrouds with the
Nov. 23. union downwards." The Governor of New York reports his inability to answer for the safety of the stamps, even though they are lodged in the fort; and lastly the Stamps
Apr. 26. 1766. for the Jerseys are compelled to be put on board the "Garland" and "Coventry" ships of war.†

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 207.
† Admiralty Records, MS.

Moreover, the information which reached England from other sources was no less alarming. No sooner had it become known in America that the Royal Assent had been given to the Stamp Act, than the Colonies assumed an appearance of general mourning. At Boston and Philadelphia the church-bells were muffled, and tolled as for the dead. The colours of the ships in the harbours were hoisted only half-mast high, and lastly, when the Act was reprinted and circulated, a likeness of a death's head was substituted for the royal arms. But far worse became the aspect of affairs so soon as attempts were made to carry the fatal Act into operation. In more than one city, tumults had taken place which already threatened a civil war. In more than one port, the ships which brought over the Stamps were seized. The Stamps were burnt. The Revenue Officers were tarred and feathered and their houses pillaged. In some of the provinces the Governors trembled in their strongholds. "I am more and more grieved," writes the King to Conway on the 6th of December, "at the accounts from America. Where this spirit will end is not to be said. It is undoubtedly the most serious matter that ever came before Parliament. It requires more deliberation, candour, and temper, than I fear it will meet with." *

It was now that the celebrated Patrick Henry—

> "——the forest-born Demosthenes,
> Whose thunder shook the Philip of the seas"—†

first raised his impassioned voice, in the Colony of Virginia, against the tyranny of the mother-country, and, in the words of Jefferson, "gave the earliest impulse to the ball of Revolution." "Cæsar"—he boldly exclaimed in the House of Burgesses at Williamsburg—"Cæsar had his Brutus; Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the

* Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. v. p. 6. Appendix.
† Byron.—*Age of Bronze.*

Third "——. Here the Speaker interrupted him by calling "treason," which was reiterated by the great majority of the Burgesses. Henry for a moment fixed his eye on the Speaker, and then calmly concluded the broken sentence—"And George the Third may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it."* Fifty-six years afterwards, we find the venerable Thomas Jefferson recalling the effect which, when a student of law at Williamsburg, the memorable oratory of Patrick Henry produced on his mind. "I attended the debate," he writes, "at the door of the lobby of the House of Burgesses, and heard the splendid display of Mr. Henry's talents as a popular orator. They were great indeed—such as I have never heard from any other man. He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote."†

One of the consequences of the discontents in the Colonies, was an alarming falling off in the trade of Great Britain. Not only were associations formed in America to exclude the importation and use of British manufactures, but the Colonists unhesitatingly refused to discharge the large debts which they had incurred with the principal English merchants, for goods and wares imported from the mother-country.‡ "Funerals, without mourning or the giving of English gloves," writes a correspondent from Boston on the 30th of March, "is become so fashionable, that there has been but one burial, for many months past, in the old-fashion way."§ By these means, trade between the two countries was almost ruined. The merchants of Bristol and Liverpool were reduced to a state of bankruptcy. In the manufacturing towns, a third of the artisans were out of employment. Under these circumstances, the people of England

* Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry, p. 65, 3rd edition.

† Memoirs and Correspondence of Jefferson, vol. i. p. 4.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 217, 296.

§ Documents, prior to 1776, relating to the Dispute between Great Britain and America, p. 5.

demanded, scarcely less clamorously than the people of America, the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act.

In the mean time Ministers were placed in a most difficult dilemma. No one doubted that the seditious proceedings in America might be suppressed by military force, but Ministers having so recently denounced the Stamp Act in its progress through Parliament, as an unjust and impolitic measure, with what conscience, it was asked, could they now proceed to uphold it by the sword? On the other hand, presuming Ministers to have been inclined to yield to the popular outcry, there lay before them the humiliating alternative of repealing an Act of Parliament, merely because it was unpalatable to a large portion of the community. It was argued that such a concession to popular clamour would create a precedent of the very worst description—that an Administration, which suffered itself to be influenced by intimidation, was unfit to exist for an hour—and lastly that, were Government to yield on the present occasion, it would be tantamount to an invitation to the people of England to oppose the next distasteful Act of Parliament, by the same riotous and mutinous acts to which their American brethren had had recourse.

Moreover, presuming Ministers to have been desirous of repealing the Stamp Act, was it likely that the Parliament of Great Britain—composed mainly of high-spirited, if not of very enlightened men—would at a moment's warning be induced to stultify their recent proceedings and reverse their late judgment; not, be it remembered, in consequence of new evidence, and respectful petitions and remonstrances having been brought under their consideration, but notoriously at the beck of open and violent resistance, and unconstitutional threats? Was it likely that the Legislature should feel no resentment at the insulting manner in which its statutes had been received by the Colonists? Was it to be expected that a young and high-spirited monarch should

at once pardon the affronts which had been put upon his Crown, and, by cancelling his late deliberate act, lay himself open to the offensive charge of having been intimidated into concession? Lastly, considering how prejudiced Grenville was in favour of American taxation, and how inclined his nature was to violent and arbitrary measures, was it conceivable that he, and his political friends, should advocate any other policy, than that of asserting the authority of the mother-country by force of arms?

Happily, Ministers had at their option the choice of four different lines of policy. The first—which, had they adopted it, would have secured them the hearty support of Grenville—was to treat the Colonists as rebels, and to enforce obedience at the point of the bayonet. The second, which was subsequently advocated by Pitt, was to declare the taxation of America an unwarrantable and unconstitutional measure, and to propose its immediate repeal. The third, which emanated from the King, was to insist on the Stamp Act being continued on the Statute Book, but so far to modify its provisions, as to render it as little oppressive as possible to the Colonists. The fourth, which was that afterwards adopted by Ministers, was to repeal the Act as an unjust and an unwise measure, but, at the same time, to uphold the credit of the mother-country, by asserting her abstract right to tax her Colonial Dependencies.

The many difficulties which, at this period, beset Ministers, might have alarmed much wiser and more experienced statesmen. Parliament was appointed to meet on the 17th of December, a day to which the public looked forward with the most anxious expectancy. On that day, Ministers were certain to encounter the bitterest hostility on the part of Grenville and his friends. That unbending and irascible man—furious with the Colonists on account of the insulting circumstances under which they had rejected his favourite measure, and still more furious with Ministers for

contemplating its annulment—waited but for the assembling of Parliament to move a formal address to the throne, expressive of the resentment and indignation of the Commons of Great Britain at the rebellious conduct of the American people. Pitt, indeed, might yet come to the rescue of Ministers; but even so late as the 14th of January, the day on which he took his seat in the House of Commons, we find him keeping the world in entire ignorance of his sentiments and intentions. When that day at length arrived, more than a year had elapsed since he had last made his appearance in Parliament. For some weeks past he had been confined to a sick chamber at Bath, suffering from his old complaint the gout, and brooding over, what he himself styles, the present "distracted and miserable state of affairs." The resistance, however, of the American people had completely aroused him. "My resolution," he writes to his friend Nuthall on the 9th of January, "is taken; and, if I can crawl or be carried, I will deliver my mind and heart upon the state of America." * 1766.

In the mean time, Pitt had not been more anxious to reappear in Parliament, than the public was to welcome him back to public life. Upon his genius, his patriotism, and his resources, were fixed the hopes of the nation; and consequently it no sooner became known that he proposed to take a part in the debates after the Christmas recess, than the anxiety to listen once more to his renowned eloquence, and to learn his views in regard to the momentous question which was agitating alike the Old and the New World, became general and intense. When at length he made his appearance in the House of Commons, he was still suffering from lameness. At the first opportunity he rose to address the House. Never had his demeanour in that Assembly been more haughty; never did his eloquence prove more brilliant, nor his conduct more eccentric. Of the late

* Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 362.

Ministers he spoke with a withering disdain, and of their measures with a sweeping disapproval. Towards the new Ministers he exhibited scarcely more forbearance. "Their characters," he said, "are fair, and I am always glad when men of fair character engage in his Majesty's service. But, notwithstanding, I love to be explicit. I cannot give them my confidence: pardon me, gentlemen," he continued, bowing towards the Ministerial bench, "confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom; youth is the season of credulity."*

Having thus vented his personal spleen, the "Great Commoner" reverted to the important question which immediately occupied men's minds. "It is a long time, Mr. Speaker," he said, "since I have attended in Parliament. When the Resolution was taken in the House to tax America, I was ill in bed. If I could have endured to have been carried in my bed—so great was the agitation in my mind for the consequences—I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it." † He then, in the most powerful and emphatic language, delivered it as his settled conviction that, supreme as was the legislative power of the mother-country on all other points, yet, inasmuch as America was unrepresented in the British Parliament, Great Britain had no right to tax her people without their own consent. "They are the subjects of this kingdom," he exclaimed, "equally entitled with yourselves to all the natural rights of mankind, and the peculiar privileges of Englishmen; equally bound by its laws, and equally participating in the Constitution of this free country. The Americans are the sons, not the bastards, of England." ‡

* Almon's Anecdotes and Speeches of Chatham, vol. i. p. 425, 7th Edition; Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. col. 97.

† Almon's Anecdotes of Chatham, vol. i. p. 427.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 427, 428; Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. cols. 98, 99.

From the deep impression which Pitt's eloquence had evidently made on the House, it must have been sufficiently manifest to Ministers that, unless they either shaped their policy according to his views, or at least secured his forbearance, if not his full support, their tenure of power would become more precarious than ever.* Accordingly, when General Conway, the leader of the Ministerial party, rose to address the House, his language to Pitt was singularly deferential. He was happy and proud, he said, in being able to declare that his own sentiments were conformable with those of the right honourable gentleman. Accident alone, he added, had raised him to the high post which he so unworthily filled, and happy should he feel it to resign it to that gentleman, whenever he should think proper to receive it from his hands. "But two things," he said, "fell from that gentleman which give me pain, as whatever falls from that gentleman falls from so great a height, as to make a deep impression." He then proceeded to exonerate Ministers from a charge which Pitt had preferred against them, of having kept Parliament too long in ignorance of the distracted state of the Colonies; and, lastly, spoke to a bold insinuation of the great statesman that the King was governed by the secret agency of Bute. "An overruling influence," he said, "has been hinted at. I see nothing of it; I feel nothing of it: I disclaim it for myself, and, as far as my discernment can reach, for all the rest of His Majesty's Ministers." †

Every eye was now fixed on Grenville, who proceeded, in a laboured but able speech, to defend the justice and

* Lord Rockingham writes to the King on the following day;—"That your Majesty's present Administration will be shook to the greatest degree, if no further attempt is made to get Mr. Pitt to take a cordial part, is much too apparent to be disguised." And he adds—"The events of yesterday in the House of Commons have shown the amazing powers and influence which Mr. Pitt has, whenever he takes part in debate."—*Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 270.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. col. 101. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 262. Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 368.

wisdom of his favourite measure. The tumults in America, he asserted, already bordered on actual rebellion, and if the pernicious doctrines, to which the House had that day listened, were allowed to go forth unrefuted to the world, he feared that those tumults would soon assume the form of Revolution. What, he asked, was the real purport of those doctrines, but an invitation to America to draw the sword? Taxation, he insisted, was a part of the sovereign power: it had been exercised not only over the East India and other chartered companies, and over the proprietors of stock, but also over many of the great manufacturing towns, and over the Palatinate of Chester and the Bishopric of Durham, long before those towns and districts had been allowed to send representatives to Parliament. When he had proposed to introduce the Stamp Act, no one had questioned the *right* of taxing America. Protection and obedience, he said, ought to be reciprocal, and, in return for the protection which Great Britain extended to her Colonies, she was entitled to expect and enforce submission to her will. Had not England, he enquired, incurred a vast debt in protecting America? Had not the Act of Navigation—that Palladium of British commerce—been generously relaxed in her favour? And now, he exclaimed, when she is required to contribute a small amount to the public fund, what is the consequence?—"They renounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might almost say, into open rebellion." One passage in Grenville's speech seems to have greatly offended Pitt. "Tell me," he said, "when the Americans were emancipated. The seditious spirit of the Colonies owes its birth to the factions in this House."*

With a countenance strongly expressive of resentment and disdain, Pitt rose to reply; but having already spoken,

* Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. cols. 101, 102.

the rules of the House precluded his speaking a second time, and consequently those Members, to whom his arguments were unpalatable, loudly called him to order. So great, however, was his authority in that Assembly—so eager was the House to hear his reply to so able a declamation as that of Grenville, that precedents were for the time forgotten, and amidst almost universal cries of "Go on," he again rose to address his audience. His look, his voice, his attitude, were never effaced from the memories of those then present. Many of the words which he uttered will ever be famous. "The *gentleman*"—as he contemptuously designated Grenville, who sat next but one to him,—"The *gentleman*," he said, "tells us that America is obstinate; that America is almost in open rebellion. Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest. I come not here armed at all points with law-cases and Acts of Parliament, with the statute-book doubled down in dog's-ears, to defend the cause of liberty. If I had, I myself would have cited the two cases of Chester and Durham. I would have cited them to show that, even under arbitrary reigns, Parliaments were ashamed of taxing a people without their consent, and allowed them representatives." Then, repeating his former contemptuous expression, he proceeded—"The *gentleman* asks when were the Colonies emancipated? But I desire to know when they were made slaves?" He knew, he said, the valour of British troops. He knew the skill of British officers. In a good cause, and on a sound bottom, the force of this country could crush America to atoms; but, in such a cause as the present one, success would be hazardous. "America," he exclaimed, "if she fall, will fall like the strong man. She will embrace the pillars of the state, and will pull down the Constitution

along with her. Is this your boasted peace? Not to sheathe the sword in its scabbard, but to sheathe it in the bowels of your fellow-countrymen!"* The debate† terminated without the House coming to a division.

Similar arguments and language to those of Pitt, were
Feb. 24. subsequently made use of in the House of Lords by Chief Justice Pratt, now Lord Camden; language, by the way, which proved so offensive to Grenville that he denounced it in the Commons as a libel upon Parliament, and threatened to have the printer brought to their bar. "My position," said the great lawyer and patriot, "is this. I repeat it. I will maintain it to my latest hour. Taxation and representation are inseparable. This position is founded on the laws of nature. It is more. It is itself an eternal law of nature; for whatever is a man's own is absolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his consent, either expressed by himself or his representatives. Whoever attempts to do it attempts an injury. Whoever does it commits a robbery. He throws down and destroys the distinction between liberty and slavery."‡ "I would ask," writes King Stanislaus of Poland to General Lee, "why it is that the right of sending representatives to the British Parliament is not accorded to the Colonies. Representation and taxation would then go together, and the mother and daughters would be indissolubly united. Otherwise I see no alternative but oppression or complete Independence."§

But, on the other hand, Lord Mansfield, Burke, and most of the ablest statesmen and lawyers of the day, took a very different view of this important question. In their

* Almon's Anecdotes of Chatham, vol. i. pp. 440, 443, 444. Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. cols. 104—7.

† On the Address of Thanks to the Throne.

‡ Almon's Biographical Anecdotes of Eminent Persons, vol. i. p. 377. Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 178, and *note*.

§ Life of General Charles Lee: *Sparks's American Biography*, vol. viii. p. 33, 2nd Series.

opinion, the authority of the British Legislature over the entire empire was supreme and illimitable. According to Lord Mansfield, with whom we find Lord Campbell fully concurring, there can be no distinction, as far as *power* is concerned, between a law to tax and a law for any other purpose. Junius was of the same opinion as Lord Mansfield.* "The Stamp Act," writes Lord Macaulay, "was indefensible, not because it was beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile in discontents." † Supposing, for instance, that the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons, were agreed in passing an Act of Parliament for burning the shipping at Liverpool, or sending the Lord Chancellor to the block, such acts would no doubt be atrocious and indefensible, but they would nevertheless be as valid as any other enactments in the Statute-book. In like manner, it was argued, the Stamp Act might be a very unwise measure, but of the *right* of Parliament to pass it there could be no reasonable doubt.

In the mean time, a meeting of Ministers, which had taken place at Lord Rockingham's residence during the Christmas recess, had broken up without their having arrived at any final and definite resolution in regard to their American policy. The bold language, however, and high authority of Pitt, appear to have decided them, and accordingly it was determined so far to meet his views, as to introduce into Parliament a Bill for the absolute repeal of the Stamp Act; preceded, however, and qualified by another measure—subsequently known as the Declaratory Bill—which asserted the supreme sovereignty of the British Legislature over the Colonies. The wisdom of this supplemental Bill has been often, and with good reason, called in question.‡ Indeed, when we

* Letter to the Printer of the Public Advertiser, 5 October 1771.

† Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 595. Edition 1860.

‡ It is but fair to the King and to the Rockingham Ministry to state, that no less high an authority than Benjamin Franklin—in the evidence given by him before

consider how calculated it was to alarm and irritate the Americans, without conferring any corresponding advantages upon the mother-country, it certainly bears the appearance of a somewhat irrational measure. To insist, as an abstract right, upon that which we admittedly dare not maintain, is, to say the least, an anomaly. Moreover, had Ministers adopted, and carried, Pitt's celebrated proposition that the taxation of the Colonies was an illegal measure, it would at once have swept away every difficulty from their path, and no doubt have satisfied the minds of the Americans.

But, before we accuse the Rockingham Administration of a gross and palpable error, we should in the first instance enquire whether Pitt's proposition was sound in law, and secondly, whether, even if Ministers had been inclined to adopt it as a part of their policy, it would have been in their power to carry such a Resolution through Parliament? The first of these questions has already met with a negative answer, and so also, in the opinion of many unbiassed persons, ought the second to be met. So recently, and so daringly, had the Americans disputed the authority of the British Legislature; so many aggravating and deliberate insults had attended their resistance to the laws, that unless the national honour had been propitiated by a vehement legislative assertion of inherent right, neither the Lords nor Commons, we imagine, and much less the King, would have been prevailed upon to revoke their former untoward enact-

the House of Commons—in February 1766, delivered it as his opinion that no ill consequences need be apprehended in America from an assertion of abstract Right on the part of the mother-country.

Question.—"As to *the right*, do you think, if the Stamp Act is repealed, that the North Americans will be satisfied?"

Answer.—"I believe they will."

Question.—"Why do you think so?"

Answer.—"I think the resolutions of *right* will give them very little concern if they are never attempted to be carried into practice. The Colonies will probably consider themselves in the same situation in that respect with Ireland. They know you claim the same right with regard to Ireland, but you never exercise it."

Franklin's Works, vol. ii. pp. 366—7.

ment. The mere fact, that when, at a later period, Pitt formally submitted his proposition to the House of Commons, only two members voted in its favour, and that he himself forbore to press for a Division, appears to be sufficiently suggestive of the probable fate which would have attended it, under whosesoever auspices it might have been brought under the consideration of Parliament.

The fact is, that the Declaratory Act created but little sensation in the country. It was carried in the House of Commons without a Division. "I am just out of bed, my dearest wife," writes Pitt to Lady Chatham, after one of the exciting debates of this time, "and considering the great fatigue, and not getting to bed till past four, tolerably well; my hand not worse, my country not better. We debated strenuously the rights of America. The resolution passed, for England's right to do what the Treasury pleases with three millions of free men. Lord Camden, in the Lords, divine."* Lord Camden divided the Upper House, but only four peers—Lords Shelburne, Paulet, Cornwallis, and Torrington—supported him with their suffrages.

Hitherto there had been no violent conflict, in either House of Parliament, between the different parties in the State; but very different promised to be the scene, when, on the 21st of February, General Conway rose from his seat in the House of Commons, and formally moved for permission to bring in a Bill for repealing at once the obnoxious Stamp Act. The House was crowded with members; the galleries and lobby were filled with merchants from the principal sea-port towns, waiting with intense anxiety the result of the impending debate. Seldom, within the walls of St. Stephen's, had party feeling run higher; never had a question of more vital national importance been under discussion beneath its roof. Many and specious were the

* Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 363.

arguments made use of by the speakers on both sides of the House. What authority, demanded the members of the Opposition, or what dignity would remain to Parliament and the Crown, if for the future their enactments were to be regarded as mere temporary measures, to be flung aside at the first yell of popular discontent, or on the first outbreak of mob-insurrection? Would not the national honour, they asked, be sacrificed by such an unworthy concession? Would it not be universally ascribed by the American people to pusillanimity on the part of the British Legislature? Would not a repeal of the Navigation Act be the next demand of the Colonists, and a recognition of their national Independence the next?

On the other hand, the arguments adduced by Ministers and their friends were far more weighty. By the continued exaction, they said, of the present obnoxious impost, the trade of Great Britain must be irretrievably ruined. Not only, they argued, were its proceeds of comparatively trifling consideration, but the tax itself was the more oppressive, inasmuch as the burden of it fell chiefly upon the poorer classes. It amounted, according to the best computation, to little more than 100,000*l.* a year; whereas, not only had the repudiated debts of the Colonists to the British merchants reached the large sum of 950,000*l.*, but already orders for British manufactures had been countermanded, to the additional amount of 400,000*l.* America, it was further insisted, might, at any moment she pleased, place herself under the protection of France or Spain; or, even should she abstain from contracting either of these fatal alliances, it was in her power, in the event of a civil war, to summon no fewer than one hundred and fifty thousand armed men into the field, whereas the British military force in America consisted of only five thousand men, who, moreover, laboured under the serious disadvantage of being scattered over three thousand miles

of difficult territory.* Rebellion in the Colonies—insurrection in the principal manufacturing towns at home —the destruction of British commerce—such, in the opinion of Ministers, would be the consequences of permitting Grenville's fatal measures to remain upon the Statute-book.

Happily, when the House of Commons divided at half-past one o'clock in the morning, Ministers were declared to have a large majority; the numbers being 275 to 167.† The members dispersed in a state of great excitement. As the well-known chiefs of the two great political parties passed through the crowd of merchants, and other persons, who thronged the avenues leading to the House of Commons, they were individually greeted with expressions of applause or disapprobation, according to the part which they had played in the memorable debate. Conway was the first to make his appearance; his countenance radiant with satisfaction at the triumph which he had achieved for his party, and at the essential service which he had rendered to humanity and to his country. Burke, in a misplaced quotation from the Scriptures, describes it "as it had been the face of an angel." ‡ The crowd, as they formed an avenue to allow him to pass, not only thanked and congratulated him, but, as his carriage drove off, honoured him with three several rounds of huzzas. But if the reception of Conway by the bystanders had been enthusiastic, far more so was their reception of Pitt. As soon as he appeared, every head was uncovered; the huzzas were redoubled; the more zealous of his admirers attended him to his sedan-chair; numbers followed him to his house in Bond Street with shouts and blessings. Grenville, on the contrary, was

* Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 296. See also vol. i. pp. 389—90.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 298.

‡ Acts, chap. vi. verse 15.

received with groans and hisses. Exasperated beyond all power of self-control, he seized one of the most vociferous by the throat. But for the man's pusillanimity, the consequences might have been serious. "Well!" said the offender, "if I may not hiss, at least I may laugh." Grenville shook the fellow from his grasp, and allowed him to go about his business.*

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 299.

CHAPTER XVII.

Debates on the Repeal of the Stamp Act—First Speech of Edmund Burke—The King's private opinion on the question of Repeal—His bearing towards his Ministers—Alleged continued influence of Bute—Ministers and Opposition alike improperly use the King's name to influence votes—The King's displeasure with Ministers on this ground—Unsuccessful intrigue of the Bedford and Grenville Whigs to gain the ear of the King.

INDIGNANT at the successful attempt to bastardize the favourite offspring of his financial policy, Grenville continued to oppose the repeal of the Stamp Act, in its different stages through the House of Commons, with a courage, a pertinacity and an ability, deserving a better cause. "It was too much," writes the sarcastic Walpole, "to give up his favourite bill and his favourite occupation, talking, both at once." * On the occasion of the third reading, he had another unpleasant altercation with his brother-in-law, Pitt. Happily it was their last. Pitt, in expressing the satisfaction which he felt in voting for the repeal of so hateful a tax, had added in his usual impressive language—"I have my doubts if any member could have been found, who would have dared to dip the royal ermine in the blood of the American people." Grenville, enraged beyond measure, rose to reply. "I am one," he said, "to declare, that if the tax were to be laid on again, I would do it." He then proceeded to charge Pitt with the enormous expense of the German War, which he insisted had rendered the tax

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 299.

necessary. "But," he added, "I do not envy him, his popularity; let him enjoy the bonfire: I rejoice in the hiss. Was it to do again, I would do it." Pitt's rejoinder seems to have inflicted a deep wound upon his irritable brother-in-law. "I am charged," he said, "with the expense of the German War. If the honourable gentleman had such strong objections to that war, let me ask why he did not resign his post of Treasurer of the Navy?" Grenville sat abashed and silent.*

It was during the debates on the repeal of the Stamp Act, that Edmund Burke made his first appearance, and delivered his first speech, in the House of Commons. In the preceding December he had been returned by Lord Verney for his borough of Wendover, in Buckinghamshire, at the instance of Lord Rockingham, who, foreseeing the valuable acquisition which his abilities were likely to prove to the Whig party, had also selected him to be his private Secretary. In vain the timid and suspicious Duke of Newcastle endeavoured to dissuade Lord Rockingham from associating himself with this illustrious man. The author of the noble Essay on the "Sublime and Beautiful" was actually denounced by his Grace as a wild Irishman, a low adventurer, whose real name was O'Bourke. He knew him, said his Grace, to be a Jacobite, a Papist, a Jesuit in disguise. Lord Rockingham, however, instead of allowing himself to be influenced by these ridiculous calumnies, contented himself with putting a few questions to Burke, with whose explanation he expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and thenceforth, to his dying day, extended to him his full confidence and friendship.† Burke's success as a speaker fully answered the expectation of his

July 17, 1765.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 306, 307.

† Hardy's Memoirs of the Earl of Charlemont, vol. ii. pp. 281, 282, 2nd Edition. Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 135.

friends. Pitt publicly complimented him in the House on the success of his first speech. Dr. Johnson informs us that it "filled the town with wonder."* His associates in the famous Literary Club gloried in the triumph of their friend. "Sir,"—replied Johnson to one who expressed surprise at Burke's becoming so suddenly famous—"Sir, there is no wonder at all. We, who know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in the country."

It has been asserted, as a proof of the arbitrary and unbending character of George the Third, that his views on the Stamp Act coincided with those of Grenville, and that he would willingly have enforced those views at the point of the bayonet.† But the Grenville and Rockingham papers recently published seem entirely to refute this assertion. That the King regarded the Repeal of the Stamp Act as an unwise and unnecessary measure, was undoubtedly the case. It was his private opinion, as we have already mentioned, that the Act ought to be retained on the Statute-book, but so far modified as to render it as little as possible obnoxious to the Colonists. To this view, however, of the question, he added a very important proviso which must not be disregarded. Should there be no middle course, he said, between repealing the Act and enforcing it by the sword, he should in that case be in favour of repeal. Such was the principle which we find him maintaining, at different times, in conversation with Lord Harcourt, Lord Strange, and the Duke of York,‡ and which, in fact, is recorded in the following note addressed by him to his First Minister:—

"Lord Rockingham,

"I desire you would tell Lord Strange, that I am

* Letter to Bennet Langton; *Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson*, p. 177. Ed. 1848.

† Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 594, 10th Edition.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 353, 362, 365, 370.

now, and have been heretofore, for modification; but that when many were for enforcing, I was then for a repeal of the Stamp Act."*

The policy which the King proposed to adopt may, or it may not, have been either feasible or wise. But, at all events, it has met with able advocates in our own time; and, moreover, was the line of policy, which, even at the eleventh hour, Ministers themselves seem to have been inclined to adopt.†

But a still graver charge has been brought against George the Third, in reference to his conduct during the progress of the Repeal Bill through Parliament. It has been confidently asserted, on high authority, that Ministers had not only to contend against open and powerful enemies, but also against the "insidious hostility" ‡ and "notorious treachery" § of their royal master—that, in fact, at the very time when the King was professing to give them his full support, he was secretly employed in conspiring against his Constitutional advisers, and in instigating his servants to vote against them in Parliament. An obstinate attachment to the Stamp Act, and a desire to get rid of an Administration which had become obnoxious to him, were of course the motives assigned by the King's accusers for the asserted duplicity of their Sovereign.

That, on the one hand, the King was not altogether satisfied with his present Ministers, it would be fruitless to dispute. Even at their first entering upon office—by their conduct in refusing to do justice to Mr. Mackenzie, and by treating their Sovereign as a mere puppet in the hands of Bute—they had wounded him in the tenderest points. More-

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 301-302.

† See the Quarterly Review, vol. xc. p. 529, and Adolphus's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 187. Ed. 1817.

‡ Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 596. Edition 1860.

§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 288.

over, there were questions on which Ministers were notoriously disagreed among themselves, and the King especially disliked a divided Administration. As a party, they were lamentably weak, and the King entertained no less an aversion for weak Administrations. They had pandered to popular favour, and of all the King's prejudices his strongest perhaps was against popularity hunting. But, admitting that the King was dissatisfied with his Ministers, from what ranks, it may be asked, was he to fill up their places, and consequently what motives could he have had for caballing against them? Assuredly, past experience must have taught him the folly and inconvenience of getting rid of one Administration, before he had made himself tolerably certain of having secured the services of another. Having so recently emancipated himself from the tyranny of Grenville, surely he had no intention of delivering himself up bound hand and foot to the tender mercies of that inexorable taskmaster. As the King himself observed, he "would sooner meet Mr. Grenville at the end of his sword than let him into his closet."* "Never speak to me of that man!"—were his words, shortly afterwards, when advised by the Duke of Grafton to send for Grenville—"for I never my life long will see him."† To apply to Bute—detested as he was by the public, and certain as he was to encounter the crushing hostility both of Grenville and Pitt—was not to be thought of for a moment. There remained, then, only Pitt to whom the King could have appealed; but as the views of the "Great Commoner," in regard to the Repeal of the Stamp Act, were far more unpalatable to him than those of his Ministers, his return to office at this particular period could scarcely have been desired by the King. Indeed, he had only to follow Lord Rockingham's advice and send

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 290.

† M. Durand to the Duke de Choiseul, September 11, 1767. *Bancroft's American Revolution*, vol. iii. p. 110.

openly for Pitt, and he would have precluded the necessity of any such double-dealing as has confidently been laid to his charge.

As usual, whatever went amiss in the administration of public affairs was attributed by the Opposition to the secret machinations and obsolete influence of Bute. "What a picture of weakness!" exclaims Walpole; "a King—to humour a timid yet overbearing favourite—encouraging opposition to his own Ministers!" Fortunately, however, posterity has access to superior means of information than any Walpole possessed. It is now, we believe, generally conceded, even by the most prejudiced writers, that from the time when Grenville had quitted office there had been no communication whatever on political matters between the King and Bute; and further, that from and after that period, if not from a much earlier date, the latter had ceased to exercise the slightest influence over his Sovereign. We have the solemn and repeated assurance to this effect of the King himself; we have Conway's word—a word which was never doubted—that neither he nor his colleagues could discover any "overruling influence" behind the throne; we have Bute's own denial of the charge, as publicly delivered by him in the House of Lords; and, lastly, we have his solemn word of honour, as published to the world by his son, Lord Mountstuart, in 1778, that, from the period when the Duke of Cumberland succeeded in organizing the Rockingham Ministry in July 1765, he had not only held no communication with the King, directly or indirectly, on any political subject, but that he had never once been in the King's presence except at a Levee or a Drawing Room.*

* Almon's Anecdotes of Lord Chatham, vol. iii. p. 314. The last occasion of the King having seen Lord Bute in private, is stated by Mr. Dutens, who was Secretary to Mr. Mackenzie, the Earl's brother, to have been in 1766; no doubt a mistake for 1765. Lord Bute himself assured Dutens that since that time he had never interfered, directly or indirectly, with public affairs; that he had never privately seen the King during that period; and that, though he continued to visit regularly the Prin-

So far, indeed, from George the Third having conspired against his Ministers, we have evidence that, during the progress of the Repeal Bill through Parliament, he identified himself with their measures, and was gratified when they met with success. To Conway, for instance, we find him complaining of "the very ungentlemanlike conduct of Mr. Grenville" during one of the debates;* and again he writes to Lord Rockingham — "Talbot is as right as I can desire in the Stamp Act—strong for our declaring our right, but willing to repeal, and has handsomely offered to attend the House daily, and answer the very indecent conduct of those who oppose with so little manners or candour."† The signal success of Ministers, on the occasion of the first Division in the House of Commons, is a subject of congratulation on the part of the King. To Lord Rockingham he writes—"The great majority must be reckoned a very favourable appearance for the repeal of the Stamp Act in that House;" and again—"I am much pleased that the appearance was so good yesterday."‡ The King's correspondence with General Conway is in the same strain. "Nothing," he writes, "can in my eyes be more advantageous than the debate in the House of Commons this day."§ Can it be believed that these professions were insincere, and that, in fact, the King was at this very time caballing against his own Ministers? If such were really the case, no language could too severely reprobate such unparalleled duplicity. But if any grounds for the charge existed, they must have been known to the Ministers, and

cess of Wales, yet, when the King came to see his mother, he always retired by a back staircase."—"Notwithstanding which," adds Dutens, "I have known people, who ought to have been better informed, maintain that Lord Bute directed public affairs, and preserved the greatest influence, twenty years after he had resigned all his places. I have even seen letters of solicitation addressed to him, as well as anonymous threatening letters, which he made me read, and then threw into the fire." *Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement*, vol. iv. pp. 182–4.

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 259. † *Ibid.*, p. 271.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 276. § *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 277.

Ministers appear to have entertained not the slightest doubt of the good faith of their royal master. Lord Shelburne, for instance, speaks of Lord Rockingham and his colleagues as being perfectly satisfied that they possessed "the confidence of the Court,"* and even the suspicious old Duke of Newcastle entertained no fears on the subject. "I myself," he writes to Lord Rockingham, "or any of these Lords, have not the least doubt of his Majesty's inclinations, but there is at present so much industry in propagating everything that makes against us, that his Majesty's own inclinations upon such an occasion cannot be too well known."†

It has been adduced, as proof of the King's presumed duplicity towards the Rockingham Ministry, that several individuals, whose suffrages he had the power of influencing, had voted against the Administration—that Lord Rockingham had in vain remonstrated with him on the subject—and that, notwithstanding those persons had thus acted in direct opposition to the Government, the King's friends remained unrebuked, and his servants undismissed. Doubtless these are undeniable facts. Yet, after all, to what graver offence do they apparently amount than that the King, under very peculiar and delicate circumstances, refrained from biassing his servants either one way or the other—that, in fact, he very properly allowed them to vote, each according to the dictates of his conscience. If some of the King's servants voted against the repeal of the Stamp Act, others, let it be borne in mind, voted with the Ministry. Let it be remembered, too, how short a time had elapsed since many of the very persons, whom the King was now expected to influence or dismiss, had recorded their votes in favour of taxing America, and consequently how great would have been the injustice of calling

* Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 357. † Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 293.

upon them, at a moment's notice—in order to meet the requirements of a feeble Ministry—to stultify their former line of conduct, and to act in direct opposition to their moral convictions. These persons, in fact, had a right to the same forbearance which Lord Rockingham had notoriously extended to one of his own colleagues, Lord Barrington, who, on accepting the post of Secretary at War, appears to have made it a *sine quâ non* that he should be permitted to vote against the Ministry, both on the question of the Stamp Act and of General Warrants.*

Moreover, with what conscience, it may be asked, could the present Ministers have "pressed" the King to dismiss his servants at their beck? They of all persons, as Walpole pertinently remarked to his friend Conway, had complained the most bitterly of such summary dismissals.† The outcry which they had formerly raised against the King and Grenville, on account of the removal of Conway from his employments, had been loud and vehement; yet Conway, be it remembered, had been dismissed for weightier reasons,‡ whereas the persons, whom the King was called upon by his present Ministers to discard, had voted against them but on one question, and that question one of consistency and conscience.

On another point, the conduct of the Ministers seems to have been contradictory. We have seen how fierce, at the outset of their Administration, had been their denunciation of Bute; yet no sooner did they find themselves in

* Political Life of Viscount Barrington, p. 101.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 331.

‡ It has been adduced as a peculiar hardship, in the case of General Conway's dismissal, that "he gave but *one* vote" against Ministers on the question of General Warrants, having voted with them on every other motion against Wilkes. *History of the late Minority*, p. 293. See, however, the Grenville Papers (vol. ii. p. 223), where it appears that Conway voted "both times with the Minority;" also *May's Constitutional History*, vol. i. p. 25, *note*.

need of his aid and countenance, than there is reason to believe that they caused application to be made to the King to solicit the Earl's support in Parliament. He knew nothing, said the King, of what Lord Bute was doing, and must decline sending for him.*

The real fact, as has been already represented, would seem to have been, that if the King showed any bias, either on one side or the other, it was not in opposition to, but in behalf of his Ministers. His allusion to Lord Talbot's opinions certainly seems to imply that he had attempted to influence that nobleman; and again he writes to Lord Rockingham—"I have received your resolution of standing firmly by the fate of the American question, which will certainly direct my language to the Chancellor."† Indeed, so powerful was the influence of the Crown at this period, that had the King, either openly or clandestinely, acted a hostile part against his Ministers, the Repeal Bill, we cannot but think, would never have passed the House of Commons, and much less the House of Lords.

It has been laid down by Junius as a constitutional doctrine, that the personal authority of the Sovereign should never be interposed in public affairs. Unhappily, this wholesome axiom was lost sight of, alike by Ministers and by the Opposition, who, on this question, seem to have been severally and equally to blame on account of the undue use which they made of the King's name, for the purpose of influencing votes in Parliament. By the Opposition, it was bruited about that the Sovereign was personally and warmly opposed to the Repeal of the Stamp Act; while, on the opposite side, the friends of the Administration made no scruple of asserting that the King had extended to the measure his cordial and unqualified approval. This improper and unconstitutional state of things could scarcely,

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 262. † *Ibid.*, p. 297.

for any length of time, be kept from the royal ear, and consequently no sooner was the offended monarch apprised of the liberty which had been taken with his name, than he took an opportunity of Lord Strange being alone with him in the royal closet, to question him as to the extent to which he considered the impertinence had been carried. The double circumstance of Lord Strange being a friend of Grenville, and an advocate of the Stamp Act, may possibly have prejudiced his answer. Not only, he said, had a report been successfully propagated that his Majesty personally desired a repeal of the Stamp Act, but it had been mainly the occasion of the advantage which Ministers had hitherto obtained in Parliament. It was then, that the King explained to Lord Strange his private views on the subject of repeal—views which we have already attempted to explain, and which he had neither endeavoured to conceal from his Ministers, on the one hand, nor to force upon them, on the other. He was for retaining the Act, he said; but with such modifications as Parliament might think proper to adopt. As Lord Strange took care to repeat this conversation to all whom he chanced to meet with, it was naturally the occasion of much commotion in political quarters. On quitting the closet, "Lord Strange," writes Grenville, "told everybody he met, of the discourse His Majesty had held to him, which was in direct contradiction to what had been propagated for the last two days by Ministers." Before night it was circulated, in all the fashionable clubs and coffee-houses in London, that the King had expressed himself opposed to the Repeal Bill, the result of which was, that Lord Rockingham, alarmed at the ill effect which such a report might produce in Parliament, wrote directly to Lord Strange requesting him to meet him at the King's levee at St. James's, where, after some warm words had passed between them, they entered the royal closet together. Lord Strange was the first to

speak. Repeating the words which the King had addressed to him, he enquired respectfully whether he had rightly understood his Majesty, to which the King answered in the affirmative. Lord Rockingham then drew forth a written document, and enquired of his Majesty whether, on such a day, he had not determined in favour of repeal? "My Lord," said the King, "this is but half." Then, taking out a pencil, he wrote at the bottom of the paper, which he took from Lord Rockingham's hands, words to the following effect—"The question asked me by my Ministers was, whether I was for enforcing the Act by the sword, or for the repeal? Of these two extremes I was for the repeal; but most certainly preferred modification to either."*

The King in fact, throughout the violent contest which attended the progress of the Repeal Bill through Parliament, appears to have carefully withheld, from both parties, all permission to quote his sentiments or to make use of his name. Moreover, as regards his behaviour to his Ministers, he seems to have acted precisely in the way which Lord Brougham—certainly no friend to the King's memory—has attributed to him as a virtue, namely, that he "refused to be made a state-puppet in his Ministers' hands, and to let his name be used either by men whom he despised, or for

* See Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 289; Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 301; Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 362, 364–5, 374. The King's conduct, according to the Quarterly Review, "was alike frank and dignified: he avowed what he had said to Lord Strange, rebuked Lord Rockingham for telling but *half the story*, and boldly, and, we dare say, somewhat indignantly, wrote so as to admit of no misrepresentation, on Lord Rockingham's paper, the important qualification of his opinion, which Lord Rockingham had suppressed. Which was the double-dealer?" *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxxvii. p. 286. See also the *Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 301. According to Walpole, the King intimated to his servants, that "they *were at liberty to vote against him and keep their places*, which was, in effect, ordering them to oppose his Ministers" (vol. ii. p. 258). Had this been the case, it could scarcely fail to have been notorious in all political circles; whereas the extraordinary sensation, which was excited by Lord Strange's gossip, indicates that this was the first intimation to the world that the King's private opinions were at variance with the policy of his Ministers.

purposes which he disapproved."* His replies to those whose opinions agreed with his own, and who would willingly have induced him to interfere in support of their views, were to the same effect as his answers to those who differed from him in opinion. He would never, he told Lord Harcourt, influence persons in their "Parliamentary opinions." His reply to Lord Mansfield was to the same laudable purport. When a question, he said, was under the consideration of Parliament, any attempt to bias the votes of the members, by making use of the name of the Sovereign, he considered as a most unwarrantable proceeding. All who knew him, he added, were aware that such were his sentiments; yet his name, he complained, had been "bandied about" in a most improper manner. Lastly, when an application was preferred to him by his brother, the Duke of York, to allow his sentiments on the Repeal Bill to be made known, he at once refused his assent. When a measure, he said, was once before Parliament, it ought to abide the decision of Parliament. He considered it improper and unconstitutional in any way to interfere.†

In the mean time, Lord Temple had entered into a close alliance with his brother George Grenville, and the Duke of Bedford. The primary object of the Triumvirate was the defeat of the Repeal Bill in Parliament, an event which, if accomplished, must of necessity occasion the downfall of the Rockingham party. As a preliminary procedure, therefore, every possible attempt was made by them to obtain access to the King's ear. The Duke of York was enlisted into their ranks, and endeavours were even made to tamper with the Queen.‡ Bute himself was not overlooked. Despised as he was by Temple, and personally

* Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 17. Ed. 1858.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 353, 371, 374.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 360. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 293.

would obey the summons; or if the King felt any delicacy in taking that step he would "save him the blush" by demanding an audience. The Queen was requested to communicate Lord Temple's proposition to the King, but very properly, and very decidedly, declined the mission. Lord Denbigh, a Lord of the Bedchamber, at last volunteered his services, but had scarcely given his consent before his heart failed him. The King, he told Lord Temple, disliked to be talked to upon such subjects, and as he was the person who would certainly be made the victim, he earnestly requested that the only letter which he had written on the subject might be destroyed.*

At length, at the request of the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of York undertook to lay the views of the Grenville party before his royal brother, and at the same time to demand an audience for the Duke. But the season for such a negotiation had gone by. The measure, said the King, was under the consideration of Parliament, and must abide its decision. With regard to admitting the Duke of Bedford to a private audience, it had ever been a rule with him, added the King, to grant an interview to any nobleman who made the request to him. At the present moment, however, as he told the Duke of York, were he to admit the Duke of Bedford into his closet it would in all probability be construed into *treating* with his Grace.† The Duke of York again discussed the subject with his brother on the following morning, but to no better purpose; and thus fell to the ground, the united efforts of the Grenville and Bedford sections of the Whig party to expel the Rockingham Administration from power.

The Bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act was triumphantly carried in the House of Commons by a large majority.

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 360, 368, 369, 372.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iii. pp. 370, 371.

"It was clear," said Grenville, "that both England and America were now governed by the mob." * The bill, though it met with a violent opposition from the Lords, was finally carried in that House by a majority of 34, and on the 18th of March received the royal assent; an event which in the words of Burke, caused more universal joy throughout the British dominions, than perhaps any other that could be remembered.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 300.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The King's health suffers from mental excitement — Popularity hunting of the Rockingham Administration—Ministers disinterested in their conduct of public affairs—Further unsuccessful attempts to induce Pitt to enter the Cabinet—The King, by the advice of Lord Chancellor Northington, reopens negotiations with Pitt—Idle attempt of Princess Amelia to bring the King and Lord Bute together—Consequences of the popular opinion that Lord Bute continued to influence the King's mind.

In the mean time, the King's health had again given way under the mental excitement occasioned by the continued embarrassment of his affairs. On the morning of the 1st of February he was observed to be flushed and heated. In the course of the day it was thought necessary to bleed him. His agitation on the following morning was excessive; it was evident to all who approached him that his mind was very ill at ease; in the afternoon it was announced that he was too unwell to be present at the Drawing Room. "I am willing," he said to his physicians, "to do anything for my people, if they would but agree among themselves."* Happily on the 4th he was considerably better.

The frequent charge which has been brought against the members of the Rockingham Administration of having paid an undue deference to public opinion was assuredly not undeserved. In fact, the King on one occasion very plainly told them that he feared their yearning after popularity would be the ruin of themselves, if not of their country.† It was the error of young and inexperienced

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 357.

† *Ibid.*, p. 370. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 207.

men; the almost natural consequence of a feeble Administration; yet though we may admit the justice of the charge, we are not necessarily to infer that every popular measure which they introduced into Parliament was fraught with danger to the Commonwealth. It may possibly be true, as has been asserted, that the negotiations which they entered into with the popular idol, Wilkes, were the effect of pusillanimity, and also that the restoration of Lord George Sackville to the Privy Council was a somewhat unworthy concession to powerful family influence. It may also be true that certain measures which they carried through Parliament owed their existence quite as much to a yearning for popular favour, as to any intrinsic advantages comprehended in the measures themselves. But on the other hand, to use the words of Burke, they at least "treated their Sovereign with decency; they discountenanced the dangerous and unconstitutional practice of removing military officers for their votes in Parliament;" and lastly, the notable facts that they prevailed upon the House of Commons to condemn the use of General Warrants and the seizure of papers in cases of libel, are sufficient to endear the Rockingham Ministry to every Englishman who has the love of liberty or of his country at heart. But still higher praise remains to be awarded them. In an age of great political profligacy, they were the first to set the example of that purity and disinterestedness which have since become the distinguishing characteristics of British statesmen. No act of corruption ever tainted their Administration. They were the first to discountenance the disgraceful practice of purchasing the votes of Members of Parliament; and, moreover, be it ever remembered to their credit that, when they quitted office, not one of them had enriched himself by a pension or a sinecure. Even the hardened old placeman, Newcastle,

refused for the second time a pension at the hands of his Sovereign.

The Rockingham Ministry had scarcely been seven months in power, before unmistakable symptoms of its approaching dissolution had begun to manifest themselves. Ministers, indeed, had never ceased to entertain a hope that, sooner or later, Pitt would be induced to coalesce with them, either as a colleague or as their leader, and consequently they had shown him a consideration which, taking into account the contempt with which he had treated them, amounted, according to their enemies, almost to subserviency. They had raised his friend, Lord Chief Justice Pratt, to the peerage, by the title of Baron Camden; one of the Treasurerships of Ireland had been offered to his brother-in-law, James Grenville; his friend, Lord Lyttelton, had had the refusal of the appointment of Cofferer of the Household; and, lastly, his confidential legal adviser, Mr. Nuthall, had been appointed one of the Secretaries of the Treasury.* Moreover, Ministers, during the period that the Repeal Bill had been passing through Parliament, had suggested to the King the propriety of making direct overtures to Pitt himself, but great as was his Majesty's anxiety to establish a vigorous administration, he very naturally objected to the fruitless and humiliating overtures which he was repeatedly called upon to make to the popular idol.† To Lord Rockingham he writes on the 9th of January, 1766;—"I have revolved, most coolly and atten-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 198. Nuthall was famous in his day for his encounters with highwaymen, one of whom died of the wounds which he received at his hands. He himself was destined to perish by the hands of another of the fraternity. In March 1775, while crossing Hounslow Heath on his return from Bath, his carriage was stopped by a highwayman who demanded his purse, and, on its being refused, fired at and wounded him mortally. On reaching the inn at Hounslow, he sat down to write a description of the fellow to the chief magistrate for Westminster, Sir John Fielding, but had scarcely finished his letter when he expired.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 321.

tively, the business now before me, and am of opinion, that so loose a conversation as that of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Townshend is not sufficient to risk either my dignity or the continuance of my Administration, by a fresh treaty with that gentleman, for if it should miscarry, all public opinion of this Ministry would be destroyed by such an attempt." * Ministers, however, were resolved that the King should yield to their demands. "I wish," writes Lord John Cavendish to the Premier, "nothing may be done to confirm him [the King] in his aversion to sending for Pitt, for, as he must sooner or later swallow the pill, the fewer wry faces he makes the better." † Lord Rockingham also writes to the King on the 15th of January — "That your Majesty's present Administration will be shook to the greatest degree, if no further attempt is made to get Mr. Pitt to take a cordial part, is much too apparent to be disguised." ‡ At length a reluctant consent was wrung from the King by his Ministers, whereupon, three days afterwards, we find the Duke of Grafton addressing the following laconic epistle to the great Commoner:—

"Grosvenor Square, *January* 18, 1766.

"Sir,—Lord Rockingham and myself are charged to deliver to you a message from His Majesty, which I think and hope will be preliminary to great good to this country. I have the honour to be, with all possible esteem and respect, Sir,

"Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

"Grafton."

"P.S.—When we receive your answer, we will wait on you if convenient." §

The King, as the result proved, was much better acquainted with Pitt's character than were his Ministers. As

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 266. † *Ibid.*, p. 264. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 270.
§ Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 371.

his Majesty had anticipated, the haughty statesman proved impracticable. Nothing should induce him, he said, to sit at the Council-table with the Duke of Newcastle;* he would give no advice unless personally to the King, or else to Parliament; he should feel himself bound to offer the Treasury to Lord Temple, and, whether Lord Temple accepted it or not, Lord Rockingham must not expect to remain in office.† The latter nobleman, however, though much disappointed, resolved to persevere. Accordingly, some six weeks afterwards, happening, while passing
Feb. 26. through Palace Yard, Westminster, to catch a glance of the new Secretary of the Treasury, Nuthall, the Earl, to use his own words, "ventured beyond prudence," and invited him into his coach. Alone with Pitt's confidential counsellor, he assured him in the most emphatic manner how essential to the well-being of the country, in its present unsettled state, he considered the services of his illustrious friend; intimating, at the same time, his own perfect readiness to yield to him at once the chief direction of public affairs.‡ Moreover, in order to prevent any misapprehension on the subject, the Earl, on reaching home, committed his sentiments to paper, which he forthwith transmitted to Nuthall. "The time," he writes, "is critical: might I wish to know whether Mr. Pitt sees the possibility of his coming aud putting himself at the head of the present

* In the "Chatham Correspondence" will be found more than one bitter allusion by Pitt to his having been "so often sacrificed" by the Duke of Newcastle. To Mr. Nuthall, he writes, 10 *December* 1765;—"I was frustrated and disabled from doing any material good last June: the world now is fallen into the Duke of Newcastle's hands; the country is undone;" and he adds;—"the same *experienced hand* now moulds and directs the political machine."—"The Duke of Newcastle," Pitt writes about the same period, "in my poor judgment will render impossible any solid system for the settlement of this distracted country, as long as his Grace's influence predominates;" and again he expresses himself "finally resolved never to be in confidence or concert again with his Grace." *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. ii. pp. 342, 343, 345.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 258.

‡ Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 311. Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 397.

Administration? I can say with very sufficient grounds that Mr. Pitt has only to signify his idea." * Pitt's reply on this occasion was not less unsatisfactory than had been his former one. Proud and happy, he said, as he should be to confer with Lord Rockingham openly and unreservedly on the formation of an Administration, yet, as a private individual, he should consider it the highest presumption were he to intrude his opinions on such a subject, unless in the Royal presence and by the Royal commands.† Thus, on the one hand, it was rendered tolerably evident that, unless invested with unfettered powers, Pitt was resolved to reject whatever offers might be made to him; while, on the other hand, however ready Lord Rockingham may have been to make way for Pitt, and to sacrifice every personal consideration for the good of his country, he was very naturally unwilling to involve his friends and followers in his fall.

The resignation of the Duke of Grafton, in the month of April, removed another support from beneath the tottering Rockingham Administration. In the House of Lords the Duke thought proper to explain his motives for seceding from his colleagues. It was neither the fatigues of office, he said, nor any objection on his part to the persons or measures of Ministers, which had induced him to retire into private life. It was because the Administration required dignity, authority, and extension. He knew but one man — one to whom the country was indebted for the transcendent glory which it had recently enjoyed — who was capable of imparting to it the necessary solidity and strength. That man, it was needless for him to observe, was Mr. Pitt. Under such a leader he would "with pleasure take up the spade and the

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 312.
† Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 399—401.

pick-axe" and serve under him as a pioneer in the trenches.*

The Seals of Secretary of State, which had been resigned by the Duke of Grafton, were accepted by the Duke of Rich-
May 23. mond. His Grace's accession to office, however, imparted but little strength to the Administration. Nevertheless it continued to survive for a few weeks longer, when it received its death-blow from the hands of the Lord Chancellor.

Robert Henley Earl of Northington, at this time Lord Chancellor of England, had formerly held the appointment of Attorney General, and afterwards that of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. In 1760 he had been created Baron Henley, and in 1764 Earl of Northington. His capacity as a statesman was far inferior to his abilities as a lawyer. A youth of wild frolic and boisterous jollity had been succeeded by years of hard study and hard drinking, which, in the decline of life, left him a gouty and surly valetudinarian. He was once heard muttering to himself in the House of Lords, while hobbling between the Woolsack and the Bar, —"If I had known that these legs were one day to carry a Lord Chancellor I would have taken better care of them when I was a lad." † Another of the Chancellor's bad habits was hard swearing; a habit which Anstey has amusingly chronicled in his "New Bath Guide";—

> "Lord Ringbone, who lay in the parlour below
> On account of the gout he had got in his toe,
> Began on a sudden to curse and to swear:
> I protest, my dear mother, 'twas shocking to hear
> The oaths of that reprobate, gouty old Peer."

* Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 421–2. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 243.

† Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 178. George III. was much amused with, and used frequently to relate, the following anecdote of Lord Northington. The Chancellor had requested the King's permission to discontinue the evening-sittings in the Court of Chancery on Wednesdays and Fridays. "I asked him," said his Majesty, "his reasons for wishing that these sittings should be abolished?"—"Sir," answered he, "that I may be allowed comfortably to finish my bottle of port after dinner; and your Majesty, solicitous for the happiness of all your subjects, I hope will consider this to be reason sufficient." The King is said to

The motives which induced the Chancellor to attempt the overthrow of the Rockingham Administration seem to be sufficiently manifest. Between him and his colleagues no kindly feeling had ever existed. The latter no less disliked him on account of his coarse and overbearing manners, than they feared him as a bold and unscrupulous politician, and especially because of his superior influence with the King.* Moreover, the charges which he openly brought against them of irresolution and incompetency, must have given them the deepest offence. He complained likewise that his colleagues not only excluded him from their deliberations, but that they even refrained from consulting him in matters which were immediately within his own jurisdiction. Lastly, motives of self-interest, no less than of personal dislike, evidently influenced the conduct of the Chancellor. It was said of him, at the time, that he had found means to enrich himself by every political distress and by every party change. Satisfied, therefore, that the days of the Rockingham Ministry were numbered, and that the accession of Pitt to unlimited power must, sooner or later, be the consequence of its fall, the Chancellor resolved so far to turn existing events to his own advantage as to secure for himself the gratitude of the future Minister. Accordingly, having established a decent pretext for quarrelling with his colleagues, by differing with them on the subject of a new Constitution for Canada,† he repaired, as he had long threatened to do, to the royal Closet, where he pressed upon the King his conviction that Ministers could maintain

have good-naturedly complied with his request. *Ibid.*, vol. v. p. 199. Two or three very characteristic anecdotes of Lord Northington are narrated by Grose, the antiquary, (in his "*Olio*" p. 173, &c.) which seem to have escaped the notice of Lord Campbell.

* The Chancellor's conduct during the progress of the Regency Bill had earned for him the gratitude of his Sovereign. See *ante*, p. 265. "There is no man in my dominions," writes the King to Pitt, on the 7th of July, "on whom I so thoroughly rely." *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 436.

† Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 351, &c.

their ground no longer; at the same time urgently recommending him to summon Pitt to the palace.* The advice, as we shall presently find, was promptly followed, and produced the desired result.

Such appear to have been the real circumstances which broke up, after an existence of only twelve months' duration, one of the most upright and well-intentioned Administrations by which this country has ever been governed. As usual, Bute, and Bute alone, was popularly supposed to be the author of the mischief. For instance, in Walpole's opinion he is still "the idol that keeps behind the veil of the sanctuary."† "The *Scotch Thane*,"‡ writes Lord Hardwicke to Lord Rockingham, "is always hovering between Luton and South Audley Street." The Duke of Richmond is "told" in July that on the 7th the Earl was seen stealing from his own garden at Kew to that of the Princess Dowager; and, lastly, his Grace is informed that, on the 12th, Bute was observed coming by a bye-road from Ealing, "so that 'tis probable he had again been to meet his Majesty at Kew."§ Happily, from another source—the curious Diary of a spy, employed in all probability by Lord Temple to watch the movements of Bute—we find not only strong grounds for ridiculing the suspicions and fears of

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 333–4. Ellis's Original Letters, vol. iv. pp. 491–2, 2nd Series. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 256.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 510.

‡ Lord Bute was commonly spoken of in the lampoons of the day as the "Thane." *Wright's House of Hanover*, vol. i. p. 403. The Chancellor's familiar designation was "Tom Tilbury." "I see by the papers that 'old Tilbury' has hobbled up to town again."——"I always expect some mischief when I hear of the interposition of that sorry fellow." *The Hon. John Yorke to Lord Hardwicke*, 19 July 1770. Again Lord Hardwicke writes to Lord Rockingham, on the 30th of June, in reference to Lord Northington's final disagreement with the Cabinet;—"Our friend *Tom* was very cross indeed, and would neither lead nor drive." *Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 356, and *note*. See also the Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 414, where by a curious error the noble editor dubs the great Lord Camden as "Tom Tilbury." Another nickname conferred upon Lord Northington was "Surly Bob." Grose's "*Olio*," p. 178.

§ Journal of the Duke of Richmond: *Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. pp. 361, 368.

Lord Hardwicke and the Duke of Richmond, but apparently sufficient proof that neither on the 7th of July was Bute at Kew, nor, on the 12th, in the neighbourhood of Ealing. The Diary is curious enough, as showing how frequent and how secret were the visits paid by the Earl to the Princess Dowager, but in no other way tends to the presumption that the King had any connivance in or any connexion with them :—

"*Tuesday, June* 24, 1766. From Audley Street, the favourite set out about one o'clock, in a post-coach and four, for Lord Litchfield's at Hampton Court, and came home again at ten at night; went out directly after in a chair to Miss Vansittart's, maid of honour to P. D. of W. in Sackville Street; staid there but a very little while, and then went to Carlton House, and returned home about twelve o'clock."

The entries from the 5th of July—the day on which the Lord Chancellor would appear to have advised the King to send for Pitt—to the 14th, two days after the King had received Pitt at Richmond, are as follow: they of course include the two days on which Lord Bute's imaginary proceedings occasioned so much alarm to the Duke of Richmond :—

"*Saturday* [*July*] 5. The favourite returned to Audley Street from ditto [Luton] this day to dinner; at half past six, went to Sackville Street, staid there as usual till about ten, then to Carlton House, and afterwards came home about twelve.

"*Sunday* 6. At half past six to Sackville Street as usual, about ten to Carlton House, and home at twelve as before.

"*Monday* 7. At three quarters past six to Sackville Street as usual; about ten to Carlton House, and home at twelve.

"*Tuesday* 8. At half past six to Sackville Street; about ten to Carlton House, and home at twelve.

"*Wednesday* 9. At half past six to Sackville Street; about ten to Carlton House, and home at twelve.

"*Thursday* 10. This morning, at seven, the favourite and his lady set out from Audley Street to Bedfordshire.

"*Saturday* 12. Returned this day from Bedfordshire to dinner, and being Lord Mount Stuart's birth-day, he went out at *eight* that evening to Sackville Street, staid there till past ten, then went to Carlton House, and returned home about twelve.

"*Sunday* 13. At half past six to Sackville Street; staid there till past ten, then to Carlton House, and home at twelve.

"*Monday* 14. At half past six to Sackville Street; staid there till ten, then to Carlton House; staid there till past twelve, and then returned home.

"*N.B.* The curtains of the chair from Audley to Sackville Street were constantly drawn, and the chair taken into the house."*

That the infamous system of employing domestic spies was carried on, at this period, not only by such workers in the dark as Temple, but by men who ought to have been far above such meanness, there seems too much reason to believe. That Lord Rockingham—a man whose character was in every other respect above reproach—should have connived at a spy tracking the movements of his Sovereign, is a fact which we reluctantly record. That such was the case, however, is proved by the following extract from a very curious document preserved among the Rockingham Papers—a document "apparently in the hand-writing of an uneducated person"—in which there seems to be internal evidence that the writer could be no other than one of the

* Almon's Anecdotes of the Earl of Chatham, vol. ii. pp. 20–1.

King's own servants. It bears date, as will be seen, the same day as that on which the Duke of Richmond reports Bute to have been "observed coming by a bye-road from Ealing;" thus inducing the inference that if Bute was really at Kew on that day, the fact could scarcely have escaped the knowledge of *both* the spies employed on the occasion. In fact, from the suspicious obscurity that hangs over the sources from whence the Duke of Richmond derived his information, we are almost prompted to imagine that his Grace may have employed a *third* spy.

"Saturday, July 12th:—About eleven his Majesty went to Kew. *I followed.* He returned at twelve. Two gentlemen came [one an officer] to represent to his Majesty the suffering of persons in North America, with a plan of an instrument which they make use of to torment them when in prison. At one o'clock Mr. Pitt came, and returned at twenty minutes past four. At six their Majesties went out in an open chaise to take the air, and returned at half past eight." *

To Lord Bute, the charges so constantly brought against him of exercising a secret and malign influence over his Sovereign appear to have been annoying in the extreme. To Lord Hardwicke he writes, at the time when Pitt was engaged in forming his ministry—"I know as little, save from newspapers, of the present busy scene, as I do of transactions in Persia, and yet am destined for ever to a double uneasiness; that of incapacity to serve those I love, and yet to be continually censured for every public transaction, though totally retired from courts and public business."† July 26.

* Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 369. Quarterly Review, vol. xc. p. 538. From the second entry in the Duke of Richmond's journal, it would appear that Mr. Pitt's movements were as closely watched on the 12th as those of the King. "Mr. Pitt went at eleven from Captain Hood's in Harley Street to Richmond. He arrived at noon, and stayed till twenty minutes past four. The King at about eleven went to Kew, although the Princess was not there." *Rockingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 368.

† Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 360.

But, if the charges in question were painful to Bute, how much more distressing must they have been to the King! Not only must his pride have rebelled against the perpetual imputations, cast upon him by the great Whig Lords, of being a mere tool in the hands of another, but experience had long since taught him how fatal it must prove to his popularity, so long as the country was instructed to believe that its dearest interests were sacrificed to the backstairs influence of his mother's reputed paramour.

Yet, on the other hand, that some ill-advised attempts were made—if not by Bute himself at least by his powerful friends—to reinstate him in the favour and councils of his Sovereign, appears to be certain. "His [the King's] aunt, the Princess Amelia," writes Lord Brougham, "had some plan of again bringing the two parties together; and on a day when George the Third was to pay her a visit at her villa at Gunnersbury, near Brentford, she invited Lord Bute, whom she probably had never informed of her foolish intentions. He was walking in the garden, when she took her nephew down stairs to view it, saying there was no one but an old friend of his, whom he had not seen for some years. He had not time to ask who it might be, when on entering the garden he saw his former minister walking up an alley. The King instantly turned back to avoid him, reproved the silly old woman sharply, and declared that if she ever repeated such experiments, she had seen him for the last time in her house." *

The truth of this anecdote is curiously corroborated by the following extract from an MS. letter written by the late King of Hanover. "I have been reflecting and trying to recall to my memory all I have heard upon this subject, and to the best of my recollection can only say that perhaps in the course of talking over, while walking with

* Hist. Sketches of Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 49. Edition, 1858.

my late revered father in the Gardens at Kew, (which I was in the habit of doing, and especially when there were crisises in the state of affairs,) he then often talked of the different difficulties he had been placed in, from various changes of Ministries. With respect to Lord Bute, there seemed to me always something which denoted a reluctance on his part to speak out on the subject; but, if I am not very much mistaken, about the time that the late Mr. Pitt resigned office, and which brought me into that very close connexion with my father, as I was the person whom he employed to make the first overture to Addington, the Speaker of the House of Commons, that he then said, (some paragraphs having at that time appeared in one of the Opposition Papers mentioning him and Lord Bute as if he had been in the constant habit of seeing and communicating privately with him after he had left office,) that he never had any communication either verbally or by letter with him. And I believe that it was on account of Lord Bute's having been invited to Gunnersbury, unknown to the King, that he seldom or ever saw Princess Amelia afterwards; and there is no doubt that, though exterior civility was kept up between my father and his mother, still there was very little intercourse during the last years between them. As she died in 1772, when I was one year old, all I tell you here is from hearsay, and what I have heard at different times from my late brother, George the Fourth, and [my] uncle, Duke of Gloucester, who I should think was upon much better and more cordial terms with his mother than my father was."*

It may be considered, perhaps, that we have dwelt at too great a length on the subject of the presumed influence of Bute over the mind of his Sovereign. It should be remem-

* MS. Letter to the Right Hon. J. W. Croker. "In speaking of those times to his son the Duke of York," writes Earl Russell, "he [George III.] said that he never saw Lord Bute after he left office except once, when, being with his mother the Princess of Wales in her garden at Kew, Lord Bute came out of a summer-house where

bered, however, that not only, for nearly two years past, had the popular belief in its existence led to many of the King's motives being misinterpreted and many of his actions misrepresented; but, moreover, that, for some years to come, it was destined to lead to the weakening of successive Administrations, by inducing the King's Ministers to suspect their Sovereign, and the people to suspect Ministers. In justice therefore, not only to the King but to his legitimate advisers, a full exposition of the relative footing on which he and Bute stood towards each other, appears to be highly desirable. Even Pitt himself, shortly after his acceptance of power, was accused of cringing to the favourite of his Sovereign.*

he had been purposely concealed. The King added that he effectually showed his displeasure at this intrusion of his former favourite." *Memorials of Fox*, vol. iii. p. xxxiii. *Introduction.*

* So late even as the year 1782, on the formation of the second Rockingham Administration, we find Horace Walpole writing;—"It was thought the King saw Lord Bute on that occasion: for others he certainly sent." *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 523.

CHAPTER XIX.

The King's letter to Mr. Pitt—Interview at Richmond—Pitt receives a *carte-blanche* for forming an Administration—Earl Temple, after negotiations, declines to take part—General satisfaction at Pitt's return to power—Dissatisfaction at his acceptance of a peerage as Earl of Chatham—Diminution of his influence on Continental politics in consequence of his elevation in rank—His pompous manner in transacting public business—Bread Riots—Suspension of exportation of grain by Order in Council—Challenged in Parliament—Lord Chatham's defence—Bill of Indemnity—The King's attention to business.

PITT was at his seat at Burton Pynsent, employed—to use his own words to Lady Stanhope—in "farming, grazing, haymaking, and all the Lethe of Somersetshire,"* when, on the 8th of July, he was surprised by a summons to attend his Sovereign. The communication was made to him in a flattering letter from Lord Northington, enclosing an autograph letter from the King. "Mr. Pitt," writes his Majesty, July 7. "your very dutiful and handsome conduct the last summer makes me desirous of having your thoughts how an able and dignified Ministry may be formed. I desire, therefore, you will come, for this salutary purpose, to town." † Pitt, in a reply, which contained as much inflated language as could well be compressed into a few lines, expressed his intention of immediately repairing to London. Penetrated, he writes, with the deepest sense of the "King's boundless goodness," he only wishes that he "could change infirmity into wings of expedition," the sooner to have the high honour of laying the "poor but sincere offering of his little services" at his Majesty's feet.‡

* Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 237, and *Appendix*, p. vii.
† Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 436. ‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 434–9.

Pitt arrived in London on the 11th of July, fatigued and in ill health, and on the following day was admitted to an interview with the King at Richmond.* His Majesty not only received him with the utmost graciousness, but gave him a *carte-blanche* for forming an Administration. He had no terms, he said, to propose. He placed himself entirely in Mr. Pitt's hands. Agreeably with the advice tendered to him by his new Minister, the King summoned Lord Temple from Stow, and proposed to place him at the head of the Treasury. On scarcely a single point, however, could Temple be brought to agree with his despotic brother-in-law. Pitt, for instance, was for making no party distinctions, and for effecting few changes in the existing Administration,† while Temple, on the other hand, was in favour of a sweeping alteration.‡ The inflated Earl, it seems, had expected to be invested with equal powers to those of Pitt, and with authority to nominate an equal number of friends to the Cabinet.§ Signally disappointed in those anticipations—and jealous, it has been supposed, of the high favour which had been shown by the King to Pitt, in consulting him exclusively, and carrying on his correspondence with him in autograph — the Earl, after two stormy interviews with his brother-in-law at Hampstead, and two unsatisfactory audiences with the King, indignantly rejected the high post which had been offered to him, and returned in unmistakable disgust to Stow. The King, he
July 18. writes to his brother, George Grenville, was very gracious

* On the 15th, George Grenville writes to the Duke of Bedford;—"I hear from town that the measure of sending for Mr. Pitt was a sudden resolution; that Lord Bute disdains having anything to do with it; that Lord Chancellor wrote to him yesterday se'nnight by the King's commands to come to town; that he came on Friday about two o'clock; saw my Lord Chancellor and Lord Camden that evening; and went to Richmond, where he was with the King from eleven o'clock till two on Saturday." *Bedford Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 340.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 341–7.

‡ Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 443. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 267.

§ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 272–278.

to him, but, he adds, "I believe, not a little delighted at my declining."* To his sister, Lady Chatham, he made no secret of the indignation which he felt at being offered "to be stuck into a Ministry as a great cipher at the head of the Treasury, surrounded with other ciphers named by Mr. Pitt."—"I would not," he adds, "go in like a child, to come out like a fool."† To his brother, George, he also writes—"I might have stood a capital cipher, surrounded with ciphers of quite a different complexion, the whole under the guidance of that great luminary, the Great Commoner, with the Privy Seal in his hand." "I suppose," he afterwards adds, "I shall be much abused, as the public is much disappointed, but I am more sinned against than sinning. Thus ends this political farce of my journey to London, as it was always intended, and I am now going to bed to get a little sleep, and to rise very happy."‡ In a pamphlet of the time, which Lord Chesterfield thinks was not improbably written by Pitt himself, the conduct of Lord Temple is treated with great severity. "But this I will be bold to say," proceeds the writer, "that had he [Lord Temple] not fastened himself into Mr. Pitt's train and acquired thereby such an interest in that great man, he might have crept out of life with as little notice as he crept in, and gone off with no other degree of credit than that of adding a single unit to the Bills of Mortality."§ "Temple," writes General Lee to King Stanislaus of Poland, Dec. 1. "is eternally appealing to the public, forgetting that the public never considered him farther than they would an old pair of boots which Mr. Pitt might, through whim, have set a value upon, which when he chose to throw aside, it

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 267. Letter from Lord Barrington to Sir Andrew Mitchell, July 31, 1766: *Ellis's Original Letters*, vol. iv. p. 492; 2nd Series. Walpole's Letters, vol. v. pp. 2–4.

† Chatham Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 468–9.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iii. pp. 267–8.

§ Lord Chesterfield's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 429–430. Edited by Earl Stanhope.

mattered not if they were thrown into a lumber-room or the fire." *

Thus may be said to have terminated the public career of this bold and intriguing man! Blind to his own comparative insignificancy, he was unable to perceive that his real importance in the eyes of his countrymen consisted —not in his being Richard Earl Temple, the princely possessor of Stowe—but in being the chosen friend and political ally of WILLIAM PITT. Thus too, for a time, was converted into the bitterest hostility a friendship which had commenced in mutual esteem and had grown into the truest affection—a friendship which had since been strengthened by the ties of family connexion and by a long participation in the same perils and the same triumphs—a friendship, lastly, which no rival interests and no attempts of their enemies had hitherto been able to weaken!

Temple's conduct towards Pitt—the facts of his publishing their private conversations and endeavouring to inflame the public mind against his brother-in-law—require no comment.† Not that Lord Temple was deficient in private virtues. If he was a bitter enemy, he was also a staunch friend. In private life he was amiable and unaffected. His purse was ever open to those whom he loved. In his correspondence with his wife, she is his "little woman," and Lord Temple is her "dear long man." On the other hand, in his public capacity very little can be said in Temple's favour. It was in fact to his high rank, to his knowledge of business and of the world, to his skill as a party tactician, to his inordinate ambition, and to his fearless patronage of the boldest and most scurrilous

* Langworthy's Life of General Charles Lee, p. 294.

† See the once celebrated pamphlet entitled,—"An Inquiry into the Conduct of a late Right Honourable Commoner." The writer of it is said to have been Humphrey Cotes, a bankrupt wine-merchant and intimate acquaintance of Lord Temple, who, there seems every reason to believe, instigated him to undertake the performance, and furnished him with the secret information which it contains. Lord Chesterfield very deservedly denounces it as "a scandalous and scurrilous" publication.

Opposition writers, that, next to his connexion with Pitt, he was indebted for the powerful influence which he exercised over the politics of his time. When Wilkes and Churchill wrote their bitterest libels, their instigator is said to have been Temple. "They had a familiar at their ear," writes Walpole, "whose venom never was distilled at random, but each drop administered to some precious work of mischief. This was Earl Temple, who whispered them where they might find torches, but took care never to be seen to light one himself. Characters so rash and imprudent were proper vehicles of his spite; and he enjoyed the two points he preferred even to power—vengeance and a whole skin." *

In the mean time, Pitt had succeeded in forming, what Burke has styled his "mosaic Administration." The Duke of Grafton was appointed First Lord of the Treasury; General Conway was continued as Secretary of State; the Earl of Shelburne was nominated Secretary of State in the room of the Duke of Richmond; Charles Townshend was induced to quit the lucrative post of Paymaster for that of Chancellor of the Exchequer; Sir Charles Saunders was placed at the head of the Board of Admiralty; the Marquis of Granby at the head of the Army; Mr. Stuart Mackenzie was replaced in his former office of Lord Privy Seal in Scotland; Lord Camden was appointed Lord Chancellor in the room of Lord Northington; the latter nobleman was rewarded for his recent treason to his colleagues by receiving the easy and dignified post of President of the

July 30.

Aug. 2.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 182. "Those who knew his habits best," writes Lord Macaulay, "tracked him as men track a mole. It was his nature to grub underground. Whenever a heap of dirt was flung up, it might well be suspected that he was at work in some foul crooked labyrinth below." *Macaulay's Essays*, vol. iii. p. 562. Edition 1860. Lord Temple died on the 11th of September, 1779, from the effects of a fracture of the scull, caused by his having been thrown from his pony-carriage in the Park Ridings at Stowe. With reference to Lord Temple's better qualities, see the *Quarterly Review*, vol. xc. pp. 515, 516; *Grenville Papers*, vol. i. pp. 149, 408; and *Chatham Corresp.*, vol ii. p. 193. It was certainly to his credit that he strongly set his face against his friend Wilkes's wholesale and brutal abuse of the Scotch. See *Grenville Papers*, vol. i. p. 457.

Council with the reversion, for two lives, of a lucrative sinecure situation;* and lastly Pitt, though the acknowledged head of the Ministry, contented himself with the office of Privy Seal which had been vacated by the Duke of Newcastle.

The announcement that the "Great Commoner" had returned to power produced throughout the country an outburst of almost universal satisfaction and joy. Not only did the City of London propose to present him with a congratulatory address, but orders were given for a public illumination, and for a banquet to be prepared in his honour at Guildhall.† Suddenly, however, it was announced that the popular idol had stooped to accept a peerage, with the
Aug. 4. title of Earl of Chatham. At once the general exultation was converted into as general a feeling of indignation and sorrow. The address and the banquet were countermanded, and the lamps, which had already been festooned round the Monument, were ordered to be removed. The citizens, by whom he had heretofore been idolized, were the first to denounce him as a courtier and a renegade. All his enemies, according to Lord Chesterfield, were, without exception, rejoiced at it; all his friends were stupified and dumb-foundered. "To withdraw," observes the noble writer, "in the fullness of his power, and in the utmost gratification of his ambition, from the House of Commons, which procured him his power, and which alone could insure it to him, and to go into that Hospital of Incurables, the House of Lords, is a measure so unaccountable that nothing but proof positive could make me believe it. But true it is."‡ "That fatal title," writes Walpole, "blasted all the affection which his country had borne to him, and which he had deserved so well."§ Never, indeed—

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 357.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 359. Adolphus's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 209, 4th Edition.

‡ Lord Chesterfield's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 427-428. Edited by Earl Stanhope.

§ Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 358.

since Strafford had deserted the popular cause for a peerage —had the acceptance of a coronet entailed on any Englishman so great an amount of obloquy and scorn. The vulgar, who had formerly been blind to the most glaring defects of the Man of the People, were now bent on denying him a single virtue. In the opinion of his former worshippers, he had been bought by the Court. He had been duped by the King. He was in fact a mere nominee of the detested Bute. If anything could have increased his unpopularity at this time, it was the pitiless storm of calumny and invective which was poured upon him by the pamphleteers and lampooners, hounded on by Temple.

The acceptance of a peerage by Pitt was scarcely less reprobated by his friends than by his enemies. It was argued, that so long as his mental and bodily faculties might be spared to him, he ought to devote them to the service of his country—that the genius and eloquence, which had rendered him so formidable in the House of Commons, would be thrown away in the House of Lords—that, inasmuch as he had now, for the third time, been raised to power by the voice of the people, it was his duty to continue *one of the people*—and lastly, that though a seat in the Upper House might be a very appropriate reward for a distinguished statesman at the close of his political career, yet, so long as his services remained available for his country's advantage, the boon ought to have been rejected.

Certainly, had Lord Chatham's power of mind and body remained as unimpaired as these censures seem to imply, every one of these arguments would have held good. But this was not the case. Frequent attacks of gout had alike unstrung his nerves and enfeebled his body. For the last year or two, his failing health had been unequal to the late hours and exciting debates of the House of Commons. Surely, then, the time had arrived when the most illustrious

Englishman of his age might, fairly and without reproach, lay claim to the ease and dignity, which by his services he had so eminently earned. Lastly, if ever man had deservedly won a coronet for his public services, it was Lord Chatham; and consequently, if the hour had arrived when he considered he might claim it with propriety, it was surely not for his countrymen, whom he had laid under so many obligations, to grudge him his tardy reward.

The impression which Lord Chatham's elevation to the Peerage left upon the mind of his second son, afterwards the celebrated William Pitt, then a child in his eighth year, is worthy of being recorded. On the day on which his father's patent of nobility bears date, his tutor, the Reverend Edward Wilson, writes to Lady Chatham;—"My Lord Pitt is much better; Lady Hester quite well; and Mr. William very near it. The last gentleman is not only contented in retaining his papa's name, but perfectly happy in it. Three months ago he told me, in a very serious conversation, he was glad he was not the eldest son, but that he could serve his country in the House of Commons like his papa." *

In one respect, the elevation of Lord Chatham to a peerage, and his consequent loss of popularity, was a serious national misfortune. Hitherto the nations of the earth had looked up to him with dread. His very name had been a tower of strength to his country. Recently, the mere rumour that he was about to return to Office had spread consternation over Europe. "You know," writes Walpole, "how I love to have the majesty of the people of England dictate to all Europe. Nothing could have diverted me more than to have been at Paris at this moment. Their panic at Mr. Pitt's name is not to be described. Whenever

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 27.

hey were impertinent, I used to drop, as by chance, that he would be Minister in a few days, and it never failed to occasion a dead silence. The Prince of Masserano is literally in a ridiculous fright." * But, on the other hand, no sooner was the magic name of Pitt converted into that of Chatham, than the dandies and diplomatists at Paris and Madrid completely altered the tone of their conversation. "The blow," writes Walpole, "was more ruinous to his country than himself. While he held the love of the people, nothing was so formidable in Europe as his name. The talons of the lion were drawn, when he was no longer awful in his own forest." †

In the mean time, the King, if Walpole's account is to be credited, had taken a somewhat ungracious farewell of his late Ministers. To the Duke of Richmond he is said to have been scarcely civil; to the Duke of Newcastle almost rude. It was only, according to the same prejudiced authority, when Ministers took their final leave of their Sovereign in the royal closet, that a friendly expression escaped his lips. "I wish you all well," he said, "particularly Lord Rockingham." ‡ But Rockingham, notwithstanding this gracious exception in his favour, was not to be appeased. He was angry with the King for having parted with him. He was angry with Lord Chatham for having supplanted him. He was apparently still more

* The awe, which the very name of Pitt struck into the hearts of foreigners, might be exemplified by more than one anecdote. When, for instance, M. de Bussy, in 1761, was sent by the Court of France to this country to treat respecting the preliminaries of peace, he is said, at their first interview, to have been "horrified with Mr. Pitt's presence." This fact is borne out by a letter from Mr. Hans Stanley, who had been sent on a similar errand to France, and who thus writes to Pitt;—"When the Duc de Choiseul informed me of the awe with which he [de Bussy] was struck by you, he said he was not surprised at it, '*car le pauvre diable trembloit de peur en partant.*' He was so much frightened that he wrote for a passport to return. The Duke showed me this request in his own hand." *Grenville Papers*, vol. i. p. 371, and *note*.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 359.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. pp. 337, 338.

angry with his colleagues for the readiness which many of them had shown to desert his standard for that of his successor. "Sir," was Conway's reply to the King on his informing him that he had sent for Pitt, "I am glad of it. I always thought it the best thing your Majesty could do. I wish it may answer. Mr. Pitt is a great man; but as nobody is without faults, he is not unexceptionable." * "If Mr. Conway's sentiments," writes the Duke of Richmond to Lord Rockingham, "get among our friends, it will be a race among them who shall go first to Mr. Pitt." †

The members of the new Administration, though more than one of them were men of eminent abilities, were unfortunately united by scarcely a single tie either of political freemasonry or of personal friendship. "He [Lord Chatham] made an Administration," said Burke, "so chequered and speckled—he put together a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed; a Cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified Mosaic; such a tesselated pavement without cement, here a bit of black stone and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers; King's friends and Republicans; Whigs and Tories; treacherous friends and open enemies—that it was indeed a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on." ‡ It had been the object of Pitt to "break all parties"; to cement a Ministry composed of the ablest men of each party; to apportion to them their several parts; and to render them as much as possible mere puppets in his hands. But, illustrious as he had rendered himself in his capacity of a War Minister, he had neither the tact, the temper, nor the urbanity, requisite to qualify him to succeed as a Party leader in times of peace. Walpole, at the very commencement of his motley Administration, foretold the inevit-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 338.

† Rockingham Papers, vol. i. p. 362.

‡ Speech on American Taxation, 1774: *Burke's Works*, vol. i. pp. 170–1. Edition 1841.

able result. "From this moment," he writes to George Montague on the 10th of July, "I date the wane of Mr. Pitt's glory. He will want the thorough-bass of drums and trumpets, and is not made for peace." *

Walpole was unquestionably in the right. Lord Chatham's "drums and trumpets" were everything to him. So long as the guns of the Tower announced fresh victories, and French banners were paraded from St. James's to St. Paul's, he had been idolized by his countrymen, and his name had terrified Europe. No one, too, knew better than himself how serviceable those "drums and trumpets" had been to his reputation. When Wilkes, in his "Letter to the Duke of Grafton," sarcastically speaks of him as the first orator—*or rather the first comedian*—of the age, the trifling buffoonery is not without its point. Lord Chatham, in fact, though a great man, was also a consummate actor. True it is that, in his own domestic circle, no man could be more entirely free from all stage-artifices, and from all assumption of stage grandeur. There, at least, he was all gentleness, simplicity, and good humour; clinging with fond affection to those who were near and dear to him, and having a smile ever ready for the humblest dependant who ate his bread. But, between Lord Chatham reading the Bible aloud to his children,† and Lord Chatham brow-beating a colleague, or over-awing his under-secretaries, there was a wide distinction. On these latter occasions it is, that we find him displaying a pomposity and a haughtiness which almost amount to vulgarity, and which seem scarcely to be compatible with true greatness. When he transacted business with his clerks, it was in all the dignity of a tye-wig and a full-dress coat, and not only were his under-secretaries never invited to be seated in his presence, but,

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 509. Edition, 1857.

† See Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 5. 3rd Edition.

according to Dr. Johnson, even Lord Camden was kept standing by him during their interviews. Charles Fox, indeed, laughed at the latter allegation, but Burke thought that it might be true "in part." * If he condescended to grant an audience to a colleague, or to any person of consequence, the pre-arrangement of his easy chair, of his crutches, his flannels, and his gouty legs, is said to have been regarded by him as a matter of real gravity. But it was the House of Commons which usually witnessed his most elaborate dramatic exhibitions. Whether, on certain occasions, he was likely to produce a greater effect if he addressed his audience in a court-dress and in seemingly vigorous health, or if he limped into the House, supported by crutches and swathed in flannels, appear to have afforded him as much concern as if he had been a young actor preparing for his first exhibition on the stage, or a young lady arranging her toilet for her first ball. In fact, whether the great statesman received a visitor in his sick chamber, or whether he addressed himself to the assembled Commons of England, his manner and costume were alike contrived for the purpose of inspiring adventitious reverence and awe.

The amusement, which the theatrical traits in this great man's character afforded to the wits and exquisites of the day, will be found amusingly exemplified in a portion of the following unpublished letter, which, inasmuch as it is addressed by the first letter-writer, to the first wit of their time, the reader will probably gladly accept *in extenso*;—

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Augustus Selwyn, Esq.

"Paris, *March 7th*, 1766.

"I laughed till I cried at your description of Mr. Pitt, hopping, crawling, and dressing; but I took care not to publish it *here*, where they believe he is more alert and has longer talons than the

* Recollections by Samuel Rogers, p. 51.

Beast of the Gevaudan.* They have not dared to send a man to our boisterous Colonies, for fear he should ship to New York. The Pope dare not acknowledge the Pretender while Mr. Pitt lives. Nay, one of the accusations against poor la Chalotais† is that he corresponded with Mr. Pitt, to whom, though no longer a Minister, they conclude a conspirator would address himself. In short, they consider him, as the Chinese do the East India Company, whom they call *Mr. Company*. You see how true the saying is that nobody is a hero in the eyes of his own *valet de chambre!* In England you are all laughing at a man whose crutch keeps the rest of Europe in awe. It is now and then such a Clytus as you, that prevents a poor drunken mortal from passing for a God; for it does not signify whether they hiccup with Chian wine or vanity, nor whether they are adopted by Jupiter Ammon or Sir William Pynsent.‡ Their heads are equally turned, and so are those of the spectators. I hope the Godhead will not forget that his arm *is to be* lame, and knock your brains out with his crutch. When you make so free with our great men, I wonder you are so tender of our little ones; I mean our Princes. Consider that they would be still more troublesome if they were not totally insignificant.

"I will endeavour to unkennel your Madame St. Jean, though, by what you hint, I believe the best way would be to address yourself to the *Lieutenant de Police*. I will enquire too for your Duc de Joyeuse *en Capucin*, though I never heard of such a print. I have a great collection of prints after Guido at Strawberry, but do not remember such a head. I have bought a great quantity at the Quai de Feraille, and so many other bawbledoms that I should be ashamed if I did not know that *la Nation Anglaise* is not quite *si sage* as it is reckoned here. Our stocks, however, are prodigiously fallen in this country, and I question, if Mr. Hume was to arrive now for the first time, whether he would be thought the

* An enormous wolf which had for some time ravaged the Gevaudan. It was killed in the spring of 1765 and carried to Versailles, where Walpole saw it displayed, as well as the peasant who had slain it, in the Queen's ante-chamber, "as if it had been a public enemy." *Walpole's Letters*, vol. 4, pp. 336 and *note*, and 338 and *note*. Edition 1857.

† An able, virtuous, and honest patriot, who suffered a miserable imprisonment, and very narrowly escaped perishing on the scaffold, owing to his opposition to the Jesuits and the tyranny of the Duc d'Aiguillon.

‡ In 1765, Sir William Pynsent, a Somersetshire Baronet, bequeathed his whole fortune to Mr. Pitt, though neither related to, nor personally acquainted with him.

liveliest young fellow in the world.* An unfortunate horse-race, in which Lauragais's horse was poisoned, has brought great disgrace upon us. It would comfort me if Madame de Sévigné was alive to write upon the subject as she did *à la* Brinvilliers. However, though you do not know it certainly, I can assure you that you *will* come to Paris this summer. They are determined to have races, and I do not know but a deputation of *Parlement*, (who the King intends shall have nothing else to do) may not be sent to invite Lord March and Dick Vernon over, as the Ancients invited Legislators. This will be *à la Grecque*. Madame du Deffand is much pleased with the idea of your returning. She is faithful and steady to the English, though suffering persecution on that account.

"I am much concerned at what you tell me of Lord Holland, and shall be sorry to find him in such a situation. I am really coming, though I divert myself well enough, and have no sort of thirst after your politics. But lilac-tide approaches, and I long as much to see a bit of green, as a housemaid does that sticks a piece of mint in a dirty phial. I don't write to Mr. Williams because writing to you is the same thing; and I forget him no more than I hope he forgets me. Adieu!

"Yours ever,

"H. W."

"P.S.—Have you not felt a fright lately? If you have not there is no *sentiment* in you. Why! the Queen† has been in great danger, received the *viatique*, and had the *prières des quarante heures* said for her. But be easy! She is out of danger. La Marechale de Luxembourg saw her the night before last, and congratulating her recovery, the Queen said—I am too unhappy to die."

* David Hume, the historian, was at this time Secretary of the Embassy under the Earl of Hertford at Paris, where he had rendered himself extremely popular with the French.

"David, who there supinely deigns to lie,
The fattest hog in Epicurus' sty,
Though drunk with Gallic wine and Gallic praise,
David shall bless Old England's halycon days."

Heroic Epistle.

† Maria Leczinska, Queen of Louis the Fifteenth of France. In the Selwyn Correspondence George Selwyn is more than once mentioned as having been a personal favourite of the Queen. The reader will probably not be displeased to find, in the Appendix to this volume, some further unpublished letters from Walpole to Selwyn.

Lord Chatham had only been a few weeks in office, when the failure of the harvest, and the consequent exorbitant increase in the price of bread, led to formidable tumults in various parts of the kingdom. The military in several places were called out, and many lives sacrificed.* It was in this emergency that Lord Chatham, in order to prevent the exportation to the Continent of the insufficient quantity of wheat which still remained in England, took upon himself the responsibility of dispensing with the customary sanction of Parliament, and, by the simple means of obtaining an Order in Council, prevented for the present the sailing of grain-ships from the country. It was clearly a Sep. 26. bold and irregular measure, which only necessity could justify, and that such a necessity existed was almost universally acknowledged. It suited, however, the purpose of Party to denounce it as an usurping and unwarrantable act, and accordingly Parliament had no sooner assembled, than Nov. 11. the laying on of the late embargo became a matter of furious discussion in both Houses. No one questioned the wisdom and justice of the measure; no one denied that, had the Legislature been sitting, this was precisely the policy which it would have adopted. But on the other hand it was argued that a law of the land had been arbitrarily broken; that Parliament ought to have been expressly convened; and further that a precedent had been created which might be pregnant with disastrous consequences to the Constitution.

It was in his own defence, on this occasion, that Lord Chatham for the first time spoke in the House of Lords. After having bowed to the throne, which, he said, had just been filled by Majesty, and from whence had flowed his present honours, he spoke feelingly and eloquently of his sensations at finding himself in that "unaccustomed place,"

* See the Annual Register for 1766, pp. 137, 140.

addressing the hereditary legislators of the realm. He then proceeded to defend the recent irregular act of the Government, alike on the plea of necessity and of common sense. Allowing it, he said, to have been practicable to assemble Parliament a fortnight or three weeks earlier, such a measure, instead of being of service, would have been highly detrimental to the interests of the country. Not only would it have occasioned great and unnecessary alarm; but, "by setting every member of Parliament in the kingdom upon a horse, to ride post up to London," it would have withdrawn them from their several counties, where their presence was of essential importance for the purpose of allaying popular discontents and suppressing popular tumults.

Lord Chatham, on finding himself invested with his new honours, would seem to have formed the good resolution of adapting his oratory to the sober and dignified style of speaking which characterized the debates in the Upper House, instead of having recourse to the inflammatory language and fierce invectives, which had too often distinguished his eloquence in the Lower House. "If any man was personal to him," he said in his first speech in the House of Lords, "or revived stories past, he should take no notice of them."* His good intentions, however, scarcely outlasted the first provocation which he received. Ministers, for instance, having introduced a Bill to indemnify the servants of the Crown who had acted under the Order in Council, Lord Chatham, in defending his conduct,
Dec. 10. was incited to utter language which would have given offence even in the House of Commons. "When the *people* condemn me," he said, "I shall tremble." He would "set his face," he added, "against the proudest connexion in the country." The Duke of Richmond—

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 371.

young, hot-headed, and still smarting on account of his recent expulsion from office, rose impetuously and bearded him to his face. "Were the nobility," he said, "to be brow-beaten by an insolent Minister?"—"I challenge the noble Duke," retorted Lord Chatham, "to give an instance in which I have treated any man with insolence. If the instance be not produced, the charge of insolence will lie with his Grace." The Duke replied that, in order to prove his words, he must betray private conversation, but if he would meet him in private, he would satisfy him on the subject. Then, fixing his eye upon Lord Bute he exclaimed sarcastically—"I congratulate the noble lord on his new connexion." *

In the House of Commons, party feeling ran no less high than in the Upper House. Here also, while the subject of the embargo was under discussion, there occurred a rather remarkable altercation. George Grenville, no longer overawed by the superior genius of Pitt, attacked the conduct of Nov. 18. Government with signal effect. Ministers, he said, had advised the Sovereign to usurp a superiority over the laws, and ought therefore to be included in the Bill of Indemnity by which it was proposed to absolve from pains and penalties the inferior servants of the Crown, who had carried into operation the provisions of the Order in Council. "*In times of danger*," answered Alderman Beckford, "*the Crown might dispense with law.*" Grenville, highly incensed at the enunciation of so dangerous and unconstitutional a doctrine, instantly desired that the Clerk of the House should take down his words, on which the turbulent

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 409-10. Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 396. "Close junction between Lord Bute and Lord Chatham, at least for the present." Earl Temple to Mr. G. Grenville, March 18, 1767: Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 7. Wilkes, in his once celebrated letter to the Duke of Grafton of December 12, 1767, expresses himself convinced of Lord Chatham's alliance with Bute at this period. "I was," he writes, "the most acceptable sacrifice he could offer at the shrine of Bute." *Almon's Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 193.

Alderman, not without a sneer at Grenville's new zeal for liberty, made an attempt to explain his meaning. He had been interrupted, he said, before he had been afforded time to conclude his sentence. He had intended to have added the words—"with the consent of the Council, whenever the *Salus Populi* requires it." These words also Grenville directed to be written down, insisting that they were no less criminal than the preceding ones. If this dispensing power in the Crown, he said, were to be conceded by the House, he should regard every man as dishonoured who should set his foot in it again. Beckford—by this time apparently thoroughly alarmed and confused—excused his language on the plea of ignorance, and expressed his willingness to retract. "He meant," he said, "to say that in the most urgent necessity, it might be *excusable* to act contrary to law, which was only to be justified by Act of Parliament." "As these words," writes Grenville to Lord Temple, "contained exactly my sense, in almost my own words, I immediately consented to them, provided they were entered upon the Journals as the proof of our sense of the Law Constitution. This was done, and thus this day's debate ended."*

The result of the discussions in Parliament was the passing of a Bill, which indemnified alike the Ministers who had advised the Embargo, and the subordinate persons who had carried it into operation. The Opposition, in fact, tacitly acknowledged the wisdom of the measure, not only by recommending the Crown to continue it on the Statute-book, but by proposing to extend its operation to other species of grain.

The following letters written by the King at this period furnish pleasing evidence of the constant and earnest attention paid by him to public business.—

* Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 342. Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 378, 379.

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Sept. 20th*, 1766, ¾ p^t. 9, P.M.

"Lieutenant-General Conway,

"I think the summoning a Committee of Council on Wednesday next, to afresh consider the dearness of corn, and what means may be expedient to remove the evil at the present moment, is very proper. But as the Attorney-General's opinion was so very strong—even yesterday when he was just returned from his visit to the Lord President—I very much doubt whether that Lord and the Chancellor, as lawyers, will venture to change their opinions. Great evils must require at times extraordinary measures to remove them. The present risings are only an additional proof to me of the great licentiousness that has infused itself into all orders of men. If a due obedience to Law, and the submitting to that, as the only just method of having grievances removed, does not once more become the characteristic of this nation, we shall soon be no better than the savages of America. Then we shall be as much despised by all civilized nations, as we are as yet revered for our excellent Constitution.

"I return you the proposed ceremonial for the espousals of my sister,* which I entirely approve of. The full power must undoubtedly *ex officio* be read by you, and the solemn contract by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I desire therefore you will have it copied, only inserting the Royal apartments of St. James's instead of the Royal Chapel, and my Brother's Christian name in those places where it has, I think, evidently been, from negligence of the copier, omitted where he speaks. As in all other solemn declarations, that is always used as well as the title. The Archbishop should then have it communicated to him, that he may see whether it is conformable to precedents. Besides, the dignity of his station calls for that mark of regard from me." †

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* Caroline Matilda, posthumous child of Frederick Prince of Wales, was born July 11th 1751. Her espousals with Christian VII., King of Denmark, took place at St. James's Palace ten days after the date of the King's letter, viz.—on the 1st of October 1766.

† Brit. Mus. Egert. MS. 982. f. 20.

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Sept.* 20*th*, 1766, $\frac{m}{st}$ p^{t} 9, P.M.

"Lieutenant-General Conway,

"Sir Charles Saunders's answer* is so very clear that I entirely decide for Rotterdam as the place for landing; but wish to know whether the going from thence to Utrecht can, at this time of the year, be performed by water, or whether the carriages must be ordered to that place. †

"I have examined the case of the two unhappy convicts lately transmitted from Scotland. As to the young man I am very willing to shew mercy; as to the woman I cannot see it quite in the same light, but think it may not be improper to send to the proper officer in Scotland for a Report with regard to the woman, as I am ever desirous to be perfectly convinced there is no room for mitigating the rigour of the Law, before it takes its course." ‡

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Sept.* 24*th*, 1766, $\frac{m}{t}$ p^{t} 7, P.M.

"Lieutenant-General Conway,

"As there seems to be so real a distress from the present excessive dearness of the Corn, and a great probability that, if a prohibition is not issued to prevent the further exportation of it, the evil may greatly increase before the Parliament can possibly put a stop to it, I am glad the Council have unanimously thought it expedient that such Prohibition should be immediately ordered. I desire therefore the Proclamation may be prepared for my signing on Friday. I think it would be but right you should acquaint the Lord President with the result of this day's Council." §

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* Admiral Sir Charles Saunders, K.B., at this time First Lord of the Admiralty He died an Admiral of the White, 7 December 1775.

† The Princess Caroline embarked at Harwich on the 3rd of October; landed at Rotterdam on the 9th of that month, and the same day departed from thence in the Prince of Orange's yacht for Utrecht. *Annual Register* for 1766, p. 141.

‡ Egerton MS. 982. f. 18. § Egert. MS. 982, f. 24.

The next letter from the King is interesting, as evincing at how early a period he entertained those wise and enlightened views in regard to the position of the East India Company, the adoption of which, in our time, has led to the reconstruction of that anomalous Government. Supported as Lord Chatham was at this period by the King, it was the grand object of his heart, not only to institute a searching inquiry into the overgrown powers and unholy tyrannies of the Company, but, if possible, to bring the Empire of the East under the government of, and to annex the Company's possessions to, the dominions of the British Crown. "I think it the greatest of all objects," he writes to the Duke of Grafton, "according to my sense of great." This bold scheme, it should be stated, had not only met with opposition in his own Cabinet, but it was apparently not till a strong pressure had been brought to bear upon Conway and Charles Townshend, that they were induced to acquiesce in the preliminary investigation demanded by their leader. "I need not tell you," writes Lord Chatham to Townshend on the 2nd of January following, "how entirely this transcendant object, India, possesses my heart and fixes my thoughts." *

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Dec. 6th*, 1766, $\frac{n}{11}$ pt. 7, A.M.

"Lieutenant-General Conway,

"The Debate of yesterday has ended very advantageously for Administration. The Division on the Motion for Adjournment will undoubtedly show Mr. Grenville that he is not of the consequence he figures to himself. I am so sanguine, with regard to the affair of the East India Company,† that I trust Tuesday

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 153. Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 261.

† On Tuesday, the 9th, Alderman Beckford, at the instigation of Lord Chatham, made a motion in the House of Commons for the production by the East India Company of certain papers connected with the Government and Revenue of Bengal. It was met by George Grenville with a counter-motion for an adjournment, which, as he himself informs us, (*Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. p. 396,) was defeated by a majority of 164 to 54.

will convince the world that, whilst Administration has no object but the procuring what may be of solid advantage to my People, it is not in the power of any men to prevent it. Indeed, my great reliance on its success in the House of Commons is in your abilities and character; and I am certain I can rely on your zeal at all times to carry on my affairs, as I have no one desire but what tends to the happiness of my people.

"GEORGE R."*

In the summer of this year the King and Queen gratified Horace Walpole by paying a visit to his celebrated villa, Strawberry Hill. "The King and Queen," he writes to Sir Horace Mann on the 9th of June, "have been here this week to see my castle, and stayed two hours. I was gone to London but a quarter of an hour before. They were exceedingly pleased with it, and the Queen so much, that she said she would come again." † Nearly thirty years afterwards,—when Walpole was in his seventy-ninth year,—the Queen was as good as her word. To General Conway, Walpole playfully writes on the 7th of July, 1795—"The Queen was uncommonly condescending and gracious, and deigned to drink my health when I presented her with the last glass, and to thank me for all my attentions. Indeed my memory *de la vieille cour* was but once in default. As I had been assured that her Majesty would be attended by her chamberlain, yet was not, I had no glove ready when I received her at the step of her coach; yet she honoured me with her hand to lead her up stairs; nor did I recollect my omission when I led her down again. Still, though gloveless, I did not squeeze the royal hand, as Vice-Chamberlain Smith did to Queen Mary." ‡

* Egert. MS. 982, f. 26. † Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 504. Ed. 1857.

‡ Letters, vol. ix. pp. 456, 457. Walpole evidently alludes to a well-known question, said to have been put by Queen Mary II. to one of the ladies of her Court—what a squeeze of the hand denoted? Being told that it meant "love"—"Then," she said, "my Vice-Chamberlain must be violently in love with me, for he always squeezes my hand."

CHAPTER XX.

Lord Chatham's haughtiness offensive to his Colleagues—Changes in the Ministry—Decline of Chatham's influence—Weakness of the Government—Anxiety of the King—Prostration of Chatham's health—Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer—His proposal to re-impose taxes on the Colonies—Carried in both Houses—Death of Mr. Townshend—Death of the King's brother, Prince Frederick—Career and Death of the Duke of York—Return of John Wilkes as Member for Middlesex—Wilkes committed to the King's Bench Prison—Attempt of the populace to force the prison—Riot and Loss of Life—Wilkes at the Bar of the House of Commons—Elected a second, third, and fourth time for Middlesex—Not allowed to take his Seat—Popular Tumults—Lord Bute retires to the Continent.

AMONG the personal defects which throw a shade over the otherwise exalted character of Lord Chatham, were an imperiousness of manner, and an almost insolent assumption of superiority in his political communications with others, which could scarcely fail to give offence to his party, and consequently tend to weaken his Administration. Such haughty, such despotic language as he used, said Conway, had never been heard west of Constantinople.* Thus, his arrogance had already given great offence to his colleagues, and especially to such of them as had served under Lord Rockingham, when the arbitrary dismissal of Lord Edge- Nov. 21.
combe from the Treasurership of the Household completed their disgust. It was in vain that the usually pliant Conway in a letter very creditable to his feelings, as well as in an Nov. 22.
angry interview with his chief, remonstrated with him on the "repeated injuries" which he had inflicted upon his supporters.† The great Earl remained intractable. The result was, that the Duke of Portland haughtily resigned the appointment of Lord Chamberlain; the Earl of Besborough

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 382.

† Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 126, &c.; Grenville Papers, vol. iii. p. 345.

Nov. 27. that of Postmaster-General, and the Earl of Scarborough that of Cofferer of the Household. Sir Charles Saunders quitted his post of First Lord of the Admiralty, and, at the same time, Sir William Meredith and Admiral Keppel resigned their seats as his subordinate Lords. "Your friend, yellow Saunders," writes Gilly Williams to George Selwyn, "gave up yesterday. He gave for the only reason that, at his time of life, he could not think of living without the Keppels." * Lord Chatham, in his difficulty, proposed to fill up the vacancies in his motley Administration from the ranks of the powerful Bedford party, with which object he caused several tempting overtures to be made to the Duke of Bedford, two of which were to create his son, Lord Tavistock, a peer, and to confer on Lord Gower the appointment of Master of the Horse. So exorbitant, however, were the demands of the "Bloomsbury Gang" for Garters, peerages, and places, that the King with good reason declared their terms to be too extravagant, and the negotiation was in consequence broken off. Accordingly Lord Chatham was left to patch up his Ministry as best he
9 to 29 Dec. might. Sir Edward Hawke was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty; the Earl of Hillsborough and Lord Le Despencer joint Postmaster-General, and the Duke of Ancaster Master of the Horse in the room of the Earl of Hertford, who was appointed Lord Chamberlain.

The present epoch was a humiliating one in the career of the illustrious Chatham. From having been the most popular, he had become one of the most unpopular ministers of his age. The haughty dictator of former days had not only sunk into an ordinary bolsterer-up of a sickly Administration, but of an Administration as incompetent as any that had formerly trembled at his denunciations, or deprecated his contempt. The aristocracy hated him for his insolence. The people imagined he had sold them for a coronet. The King alone remained his friend—his staunch,

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. ii. p. 91.

earless, and ever-encouraging friend. As might have been expected, the many difficulties by which he was beset—his sense of altered greatness, his estrangement from Lord Temple, as well as the constant and harassing attacks of a formidable Opposition—produced their worst effects upon a body which had been long diseased, and upon a mind which appears to have been constitutionally hypochondriacal. In vain, on the Prorogation of Parliament taking place, he sought relief from the air and waters of Bath. On his road back to London he was again prostrated by his disorder, which for more than a fortnight kept him a prisoner at the Castle Inn at Marlborough. One of his weaknesses at the time was the assumption of a pompous parade, which scarcely seems to have been consistent with a sane, and much less with an elevated mind. While at Marlborough the streets are said to have swarmed with his liveries.* The same parade had characterized his sojourn at Bath. "Lord Chatham is here," writes Gilly Williams to George Selwyn, "with more equipage, household, and retinue, than most of the old patriarchs used to travel with in ancient days. He comes nowhere but to the Pump Room. Then he makes a short essay and retires." † "He has been at Bath:" writes Walpole; "they stood up the whole time he was in the Rooms." ‡

In the mean time, Parliament had re-assembled, and his colleagues had been thrown into despair at the absence of their leader. In vain the Duke of Grafton and Lord Shelburne wrote to him for advice and instructions. The answers which 1767, Jan. 16.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 416. "The truth was," writes Lord Macaulay, "that the invalid had insisted that, during his stay, all the waiters and stable-boys of the Castle should wear his livery." *Essays*, vol. iii. p. 612, 10th Edition. According to Lord Stanhope, this story has no foundation in fact. "It used to be told," he says, "by the late Lord Holland; and most clearly, as I think, arose from his imperfect recollection of a passage resembling, but really quite different, in Lord Orford's, then MS., Memoirs." *Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 267, *note*. Lord Russell, however, on the authority of Lord Chatham's friend, Lord Shelburne, seems to entertain little doubt of the truth of the story. *Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 117.

† Selwyn Corresp., vol. ii. p. 60.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. p. 503.

they received were almost invariably either in the handwriting of Lady Chatham or of his private secretary, and invariably to the same purport, that he was in much too wretched a state of health to attend to business. To the same effect was his reply to the Duke of Grafton, when
Feb. 22. his Grace offered to "run down" to Marlborough, and discuss the King's affairs with him. "It was by no means practicable for him," he wrote back, "to enter into the discussions of business." * At length, early in March, his health had so far improved as to enable him to proceed to London, from whence, in May, he removed to North End, Hampstead. So far, however, as his change of residence was of any concern to his country or his party, he might just as well have remained at Bath. The consequences of this state of things may be readily imagined. His colleagues, no longer overawed by the presence of their Chief, began to disagree among themselves; while the attacks of the Opposition upon the Government became correspondingly bolder and more effective. For instance, the fate of the first measure brought forward by Ministers on the re-assembling of Parliament, very nearly produced the consequence of overthrowing the Government. Charles Townshend, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, having introduced into the House of Commons a Bill for keeping up the Land Tax at four shillings in the pound for another year, an amendment was proposed by Dowdeswell, on the part of the country gentlemen, which, meeting with the
Feb. 26. powerful support of George Grenville, was carried against the Government by a majority of eighteen.

The story of Lord Chatham's existence, from the date of the prorogation of Parliament in December 1766, till his retirement from office in October 1768, contains little more than the painful annals of a sick chamber. During this period the King not only frequently wrote to his prostrated Minister,

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 218.

but nothing could be more considerate, more kind, nay, we might almost say, more affectionate, than his letters. Doubtless the horror entertained by George the Third of receiving back George Grenville as his Minister, may more or less have had to do with his continued staunch support of the most despotic, although now one of the most helpless of his subjects. He was resolved, as he told Lord Bristol, not Mar. 2. to surrender himself "a prisoner and bound" to his former inexorable task-masters. "As for losing questions in Parliament," he said, "it did not intimidate him. He would stand his ground, and be the last to yield, although he stood single." * To the Duke of Grafton his language was even stronger. He would almost rather, he said, resign his Crown than receive Grenville back again as his Minister.†

Such being the state of the King's feelings, his anxiety for Lord Chatham's recovery may be readily conceived. It was in vain, however, that he despatched letter after letter to Hampstead; in vain that he proposed to visit him in his sick chamber; in vain that he expressed the most earnest desire to consult with him, though only for a quarter of an hour. He "would not talk of business," wrote the King, "but only wanted to have the world know that he had attended him." ‡ Disappointed in the result of these repeated and gracious appeals to his Minister, the King's next endeavour was to induce him to receive the Duke of Grafton. "Your duty and affection for my person," he writes to the May 30. prostrated statesman—"your own honour, call on you to make an effort. Five minutes' conversation with you would raise his spirits, for his heart is good. Mine, I thank Heaven, wants no rousing. My love to my country, as well as what I owe to my own character and to my family, prompt me

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 226—7.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 52.
‡ Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 226.

not to yield to faction. Though none of my Ministers stand by me, I cannot truckle."* Overpowered at length by these urgent appeals to his loyalty and better feelings, the Earl reluctantly consented to receive the Duke of Grafton in his sick chamber at North End. "Penetrated," he writes to
May 30. the King, "and overwhelmed with your Majesty's letter, and the boundless extent of your royal goodness—totally incapable as illness renders me, I obey your Majesty's commands, and shall beg to see the Duke of Grafton to-morrow morning, though hopeless that I can add weight to your Majesty's gracious wishes. Illness and affliction deprive me of the power of adding more, than to implore your Majesty to look with indulgence on this imperfect tribute of duty and devotion."†

June 1. The interview between Lord Chatham and the Duke of Grafton proved to be a most painful one to both. "Though I expected," writes the Duke, "to find Lord Chatham very ill indeed, his situation was different from what I had imagined. His nerves and spirits were affected to a dreadful degree, and the sight of his great mind, bowed down and thus weakened by disorder, would have filled me with grief and concern, even if I had not long borne a sincere attachment to his person and character. The confidence he reposed in me demanded every return on my part, and it appeared like cruelty in me to have been urged by any necessity to put a man I valued to so great suffering."‡ No less amiable a consideration for the Earl's feelings was shown by the King.

The King to the Earl of Chatham.

"Richmond Lodge, *June* 2, 1767, 10*m. past* 10, *a.m.*

"Lord Chatham,

"My sole purpose in writing, is the desire of knowing whether the anxiety and hurry of the last week has not affected

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 261. † *Ibid.*, p. 262.
‡ MS. Memoirs, quoted in *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. iii. p. 51, *note.*

your health. I should have sent yesterday had I not thought a day of rest necessary previous to your being able to give an answer.

"If you have not suffered, which I flatter myself, I think with reason I may congratulate you on its being a good proof you are gaining ground.

"GEORGE R." *

The interview between Lord Chatham and the Duke of Grafton was so far of advantage to the King's government, that the Duke, who had previously intended to retire from office, was prevailed upon to remain at the head of the Treasury; a concession on the part of his Grace which, in consequence of the continued illness of his chief, rendered him from this time virtually, if not nominally, Prime Minister of England.

Of the distressing mental and bodily condition of Lord Chatham during the summer of 1767, we have other contemporary accounts besides that of the Duke of Grafton. "Lord Chatham's state of health," writes Mr. Whately to Lord Lyttelton on the 30th of July, "is certainly the lowest dejection and debility, that mind or body can be in. He sits all the day leaning on his hands, which he supports on the table; does not permit any person to remain in the room; knocks when he wants anything; and having made his wants known, gives a signal, without speaking, to the person who answered his call to retire." † General Lee also writes to the King of Poland—"He has fits of crying, Dec. 1. starting, and every effect of hysterics. It is affirmed, indeed, that ten years ago he was in the very same condition —that therefore a possibility remains of his recovering once more his nerves, and with them all his functions." ‡ At

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 265.
† Phillimore's Memoirs of Lord Lyttelton, vol. ii. p. 729.
‡ Langworthy's Life of General Charles Lee, p. 293.

times, indeed, he is said to have been "conver and even cheerful." No sooner, however, was any a sion made to politics, than, according to Walpole— started, fell into tremblings, and the conversation broken off." *

In the month of September, Lord Chatham remov from North End to Burton Pynsent. Hopes had be entertained that his health might be benefited by t change, but, instead of alleviating, it would seem have aggravated his mysterious disorder. There we even moments, it is said, when the sight of a neig bour's house in the distance, the sound of mirth issui from his children's play-room, or a casual allusion to debate in Parliament, produced an irritation in his min amounting almost to frenzy. A certain bleak hill more especially offended his morbid fancy, and accordingly he ordered his gardener to plant it with evergreens. The man inquired of what description? "With cedars and cypresses," was the reply. The gardener was unable to conceal his surprise. "Why, my lord," he remonstrated, "all the nursery-gardens in the county would not supply a hundredth part."—"No matter;" was the peremptory rejoinder, "send for them from London;" and accordingly the trees were brought from London by land-carriage, at a vast expense. "His sickly and uncertain appetite," writes Walpole, "was never regular, and his temper could put up with no defect: thence a succession of chickens were boiling and roasting at every hour, to be ready whenever he should call." †

Oct. Another of Lord Chatham's morbid fancies was to recover possession of Hayes, a seat which, on his becoming the

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 44. Walpole elsewhere writes;—"So childish and agitated was his whole frame, that if a word of business was mentioned to him, tears and tremblings immediately succeeded to cheerful, indifferent conversation." *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 451.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 41—2.

possessor of Burton Pynsent, he had sold to Mr. Thomas Walpole. At Hayes, he had passed some of the happiest years of his life. It was associated in his mind with the many glorious triumphs of former days. The sums which he had lavished on the place, in purchasing and pulling down neighbours' houses, in building and in rebuilding, in planting trees by torchlight, and in otherwise indulging his capricious humour, had been almost ruinous. He now imagined that its accustomed air would restore him to health, and consequently Lady Chatham was induced to write to Mr. Walpole, earnestly entreating him to dispose of the place to its former owner. Upon his answer, she said, depended alike her husband's health, her own happiness, and that of her children. The reply which she received drew a sigh from the suffering Earl. "That," he exclaimed, "would have saved me." Mr. Walpole, it seems, had himself expended a considerable sum in improving the place, and had become as attached to it as Lord Chatham had ever been. He was willing, he wrote back to Lady Chatham, to remove at once from Hayes with his family, and place it at the Earl's disposal during the summer months; but graceful as this concession was it was very far from satisfying the invalid. Not only did the disappointment render him irritable in the extreme, but his brother-in-law, James Grenville, describes his language, when he spoke to him on the subject, as having been even "ferocious." Under these circumstances Lady Chatham addressed a second and still more pathetic appeal to Mr. Walpole, who, touched by her arguments and entreaties, very generously consented to surrender his purchase. "I can no longer," he writes to Lord Chatham, "resist such affecting motives for restoring it to your Lordship, who I desire will consider yourself master of Hayes from this moment." How deeply distressed he was at making the concession, his friend, Lord Camden, has recorded. "I do assure your Ladyship"—the latter writes to Lady

Oct. 30.

Oct. 30.

Chatham—"I have never been more affected with any scene I have ever been witness to, than what I felt upon this occasion, and am most sensibly touched with Mr. Walpole's singular benevolence and good-nature. The applause of the world and his own conscience will be his reward."* The arrangements for the removal of the invalid from Burton Pynsent were made with as little delay as possible, and in the month of December he again took possession of Hayes.

In the mean time, the other members of the Administration, persuaded that the health of their chief was such as to render him permanently incapable of resuming the reins of office, had not only ceased to consult him, but had begun to act in direct opposition to his well-known principles and wishes. "If ever Lord Chatham," said Burke, "fell into a fit of the gout, or if any other cause withdrew him from public cares, principles, directly the contrary of his own, were sure to predominate. When his face was hid but for a moment, his whole system was on a wide sea, without chart or system." † "During his absence," writes Lord Chesterfield, "Charles Townshend has talked of him, and at him, in such a manner that henceforwards they must be either much worse or much better together, than ever they were in their lives." ‡

Unquestionably, with the single exception of Lord Chatham, the most gifted and brilliant statesman of his day was Charles Townshend. In eloquence, in natural abilities, and in the influence which he acquired over the House of Commons, he was admittedly inferior only to his illustrious chief. It was in allusion to the simultaneous decline of Lord Chatham's powers, and to the dazzling dawn of Charles

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 42 to 44. Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 289 to 291.

† Speech on American Taxation, in 1774: *Burke's Works*, vol. i. p. 171.

‡ Lord Chesterfield's Letters, vol. iv. p. 447. Edited by Earl Stanhope.

Townshend's genius, that Burke delivered one of the finest metaphors with which he ever delighted the ears of the House of Commons. "Even then," he exclaimed—"even before this splendid orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the Heavens arose another luminary, and for his hour, became lord of the ascendant. That light too is passed and set for ever. You understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townshend." *

Charles Townshend was the second son of Charles, third Viscount Townshend, by the celebrated Audrey Harrison, whose wit and irregularities he inherited. His countenance was handsome and expressive; his figure commanding and admirably well-proportioned. Every society into which he entered delighted in him. In the House of Commons he was almost idolized. "There are many young members in the House," said Burke, "who never saw that prodigy Charles Townshend, nor of course know what a ferment he was able to excite in everything by the violent ebullition of his mixed virtues and failings—for failings he had undoubtedly. Many of us remember them. We are this day considering the effect of them. But he had no failings which were not owing to a noble cause; to an ardent, generous, perhaps an immoderate passion for fame; a passion which is the instinct of all great souls.† He worshipped that goddess wheresoever she appeared; but he paid his particular devotions to her in her favourite habitation—in her chosen temple, the House of Commons." ‡

Never perhaps has there been exhibited a more remark-

* Speech on American Taxation: *Burke's Works*, vol. i. p. 171.

† "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise—
That last infirmity of noble mind—
To scorn delights and live laborious days."—*Lycidas.*

‡ Burke's Works, vol. i. p. 171.

able compound of talent, levity, wit, ambition, learning, and vanity, than was centred in this irregular genius. In eloquence he was inferior only to Lord Chatham. In humour and mimicry neither Garrick nor Foote surpassed him. In wit and repartee Selwyn alone was his superior. It was after a brilliant combat of wit between these two celebrated men at Earl Gower's dinner-table that, on the party breaking up, Townshend carried Selwyn with him in his chariot as far as the door of White's. "Good night!" said the former, as they parted;—"Good night!" replied Selwyn; "and remember this is the first *set-down* you have given me to-day."

It was in the Spring of this year, on the occasion of a debate on the affairs of the East India Company, that Charles Townshend delivered one of the most brilliant
May 8. speeches that had ever been listened to in the House of Commons. Earlier in the day he had spoken with great calmness and judgment, and, at the conclusion of his speech, retired to dinner with two of his friends, Sir George Yonge and Sir George Colebrooke. About eight o'clock in the evening he made his re-appearance in the House—"half drunk," according to Walpole, "with champagne, and more intoxicated with spirits." * But, whatever may have been the source of his inspiration, he had scarcely risen to address the House before there flowed from his lips such bursts of impassioned eloquence, such flashes of wit, such bitterness of invective, so varied a torrent of mingled ribaldry and learning, of happiness of allusion, imagery and quotation, that even those who were best

* That he was at least half intoxicated on this occasion, rests not only on the mere assertion of Walpole, but seems to have been the impression of all who listened to his wonderful eloquence. The fact, however, is confidently denied by Sir George Colebrooke. "I write with certainty," he says, "for Sir George Yonge and I were the only persons who dined with him, and we had but one bottle of champagne after dinner." *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. iii. p. 26, *note*.

acquainted with his extraordinary powers seem to have been no less astonished and enchanted at the display, than the youngest member in the House. In the words of Walpole, who listened to this memorable oration—"Such was the wit, abundance, and impropriety of this speech, that for some days men could talk or inquire of nothing else. 'Did you hear Charles Townshend's champagne speech?' was the universal question. For myself, I protest it was the most singular pleasure of the kind I ever tasted. The bacchanalian enthusiasm of Pindar flowed in torrents less rapid and less eloquent, and inspired less delight than Townshend's imagery, which conveyed meaning in every sentence. It was Garrick writing and acting extempore scenes of Congreve." After the House had broken up, Walpole had the good fortune to sup with this universal genius at General Conway's. "To me," he says, "the entertainment of the day was complete. The flood of his gaiety not being exhausted, he kept the table in a roar till two in the morning by various sallies and pictures, the last of which was a scene in which he mimicked inimitably his own wife,* and another great lady with whom he fancied himself in love, and both whose foibles and manner he counterfeited to the life. Mere lassitude closed his lips at last; not the want of wit and new ideas." †

Thus idolized by the House of Commons and released from restraint by the illness of the only one of his contemporaries of whom he stood in awe—entertaining also a very contemptuous opinion of the administrative abilities of his associates in office and very exaggerated notions of his own—Charles Townshend began to assume an independence and authority,

* His wife, to whom he was married on the 15th of August, 1755, was Lady Caroline, daughter of John Duke of Argyle, and widow of Francis Earl of Dalkeith. On the 22nd December, 1766, she was created Baroness Greenwich, with limitation of the title to her sons by Charles Townshend. Charles Townshend was the father of two sons by Lady Greenwich, neither of whom left issue.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 23 to 27.

both at the Council-table and in Parliament, which were no less offensive than they were embarrassing to his colleagues. "His behaviour," writes the Duke of Grafton on the 13th of March, "was on the whole such as no Cabinet will, I am confident, ever submit to." * It was in vain that the Duke and Lord Shelburne severally wrote to complain of his conduct to their chief. Either Lady Chatham considered her husband too ill to justify her in laying their letters before him, or else he was in too nervous a state to heed their remonstrances. Townshend in fact was already aspiring after the premiership.

Such insubordinate conduct as that of this mercurial Minister—conduct which under any circumstances would have been productive of great inconvenience to the Government—threatened, in the present critical condition of public affairs, to be fatal, not only to his party, but to his country. One question there was—and this no less vital a one than that of re-imposing taxes upon the American people—which even so reckless a Minister as Charles Townshend, one would have thought, might have hesitated to revive. But common sense and common prudence were none of the characteristics of this brilliant person. "He knew," was his famous expression in the House of Commons, "the mode by which a Revenue might be drawn from the Americans, without giving them offence." Whether these words had been premeditated, whether they were uttered in a moment of caprice, or whether they were meant to conciliate George Grenville and his friends, are questions of no very material importance. The mischief, however, which resulted from them was irremediable. Grenville, deeply interested in the question, instantly started up and vehemently called upon the incautious Minister to pledge himself to

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 232. And again, Lord Shelburne writes to Lord Chatham, on the same day, that Mr. Townshend's conduct "really continues excessive on every occasion." *Ibid.*, p. 235.

he execution of his project. The challenge, to the inconceivable surprise and dismay of Townshend's colleagues, was at once accepted by him. "Mr. Conway," writes the Duke of Grafton, "stood astonished at the unauthorized proceeding of his vain and imprudent colleague." The Cabinet, of course, had the option either of adopting his measure, or of demanding the King to dismiss him from his Councils. Unfortunately, in the absence of Lord Chatham, they chose the former course. "No one of the Ministry," writes the Duke of Grafton, "had authority sufficient to advise the dismission of Mr. Charles Townshend, and nothing less could have stopped the measure; Lord Chatham's absence being, in this instance as well as others, much to be lamented." * Thus, in order to obtain a paltry revenue of some £35,000 or £40,000 a-year, was America once more set in flames, and England destined to be robbed of her noblest colony.

It was on the 13th of May that Charles Townshend formally brought under the consideration of the House of Commons his famous and fatal measure for drawing a revenue from the American Colonies. In that assembly it was tolerably certain to meet with favour. So long as money flowed into the Treasury from any other quarter than from the purses of the Members, it was probably a matter of indifference to one half of them whether it was wrung from America or came from the Antipodes. Moreover, many were disgusted at what they regarded as the ungrateful conduct of the Colonists, in return for the Repeal of the Stamp Act. "Repeal," according to Burke, "began to be in as bad odour in the House of Commons as the Stamp Act had been the Session before." †

* Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. v. p. xviii. Appendix. Belsham's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 202,

† Speech on American Taxation, in 1774: *Burke's Works*, vol. i. p. 172. The

The principal proposition submitted by Townshend to Parliament, was to impose certain duties on glass, paper, paste-board, white and red lead, painters' colours and tea, imported into the American Colonies. These taxes, it will be observed, were entirely *external;* that is to say, they were laid on no article of produce either of American labour or of American soil. "An excise," said Franklin, in his evidence before the House of Commons, "the Americans think you have no right to levy within their country. But the sea is yours; you maintain by your fleets the safety of navigation in it, and keep it clear of pirates. You may have, therefore, a natural and equitable right to some toll or duty on merchandize carried through that part of your dominions, towards defraying the expense you are at in ships to maintain the safety of that carriage." * By Franklin's reasoning, as much apparently as from any other single cause, the English Parliament was induced to lend a favourable ear to Townshend's untoward measure. With the single exception of a strong protest from Lord Camden, the bill was carried in both Houses, not only with little opposition, but almost without a remonstrance.

In the mean time, the suffering leader of this disorganized Administration appears to have been kept in entire ignorance of what was happening at head quarters. Lord Shelburne, indeed, had written to him on the 1st of February to the effect that "general conversation" attributed to Mr. Townshend a plan for producing "a revenue on imports" in America; † but, on the other

unhappy consequences of the continued insubordination in America had been foretold by Lord Chatham. To Lord Shelburne we find him writing on the 3rd of February, 1767,—"The torrent of indignation in Parliament will, I apprehend, become irresistible, and they will draw upon their heads national resentment by their ingratitude; and ruin, I fear, upon the whole State by the consequences." *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 189.

* Memoirs and Writings of Franklin, vol. ii. p. 371.

† Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 185.

hand, that one of his own subordinates—without any sanction from himself and contrary to the judgment of his colleagues—should have the hardihood to bring before Parliament a measure of such vital importance, could scarcely have entered into the imagination of one so accustomed to meet with passive obedience as Lord Chatham had ever been. The die, however, had been cast; and accordingly there had remained but the unpleasant task of breaking to the invalid, so soon as his nerves were able to bear the communication, this, the most momentous of the political events which had occurred during his mysterious malady. The person, to whose unenviable lot it had fallen to enlighten him on the subject, was the Duke of Grafton. "I had to relate," writes the Duke, "the struggles we had experienced in carrying some points, especially in the House of Lords; the opposition, also, we had encountered in the East India business from Mr. Conway, as well as Mr. Townshend, together with the unaccountable conduct of the latter gentleman, who had suffered himself to be led to pledge himself at last, *contrary to the known decision of every member of the Cabinet*, to draw a certain revenue from the Colonies." * The astonishment of Rip Van Winkle when he awoke from his long sleep in the Kaatskill mountains, or of Abou Hassan when he found himself in the couch of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, could scarcely have exceeded that of Lord Chatham, as the Duke of Grafton unfolded to him the events of the last few months. But prevention was no longer possible. The sick Earl, indeed, might have recommended to the King the removal of the refractory Chancellor of the Exchequer from his Councils, but such a procedure might have sadly weakened the Administration, without effecting any corresponding advantage. Moreover, even if it had been expedient, he was not in a condition to

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 51, *note*.

make the effort. He not only speedily relapsed into his late cruel state of mental distemper, but it was not till nearly a year and a half had elapsed, that he was again capable of taking any interest in State affairs.

It was in the midst of Charles Townshend's dreams of greatness, and while he was actually engaged in a secret project for constructing a new Administration which was to
Sept. 4. have acknowledged him as its chief, that death laid its hand upon that most gifted though erratic genius. He had, to all appearance, recovered from a slow fever, which had attacked him in the summer, when a relapse took place which turned into a putrid fever, that hurried him to his grave at the early age of forty-two.* The effect which his premature death produced on the minds of those who had listened to his wonderful eloquence in the House of Commons, as also on those who had enjoyed the charms of his wit and conversational powers, is best exemplified by the tributes of those who survived him. "What genius!" writes Lord Buckinghamshire; "What imagination! What knowledge! What abilities! What occasionally exquisite feelings! How greatly the first were misused! How soon he forgot the last!" † In like manner Lady Hervey writes two days after his death;—"One of the brightest stars in our hemisphere is now set. Mr. Townshend will be missed as a speaker in the House of Commons, and as an inexhaustible fund of entertainment in all company; but no party or set of men will want him, because none ever knew when they had him. When I was told of his death I could hardly forbear saying—'Alas, poor Yorick! where be now your gibes, your flashes of merriment that set the table in a roar?' 'Twas only in that light I could think of him.

* "But, the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears
And splits the thin-spun life."—*Lycidas.*

† Townshend MS. inedited.

Great is the difference between his real death and the political demise of Lord Chatham. Certain companies at certain times will regret the one; but a nation suffers in the loss of the other. Mr. Townshend was a shining, sparkling star; Lord Chatham is an invigorating, vivifying sun. We miss the one; but can hardly subsist without the other." *

Although equanimity had never been a virtue of Charles Townshend, he met his approaching dissolution with the greatest fortitude and even cheerfulness. "Charles Townshend," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, "is dead. All those parts and fire are extinguished; those volatile salts are evaporated; that first eloquence of the world is dumb; that duplicity is fixed; that cowardice terminated heroically. He joked on death as naturally as he used to do on the living, and not with the affectation of philosophers who wind up their works with sayings which they hope to have remembered." †

In consequence of the death of Charles Townshend, several changes took place in the Ministry. The vacant post of Chancellor of the Exchequer was conferred, or rather forced upon Lord North, and Mr. Thomas Townshend was Dec. 10. appointed to succeed him as Paymaster of the Forces. Subsequently, in consequence of the resignations of Lord Northington and of General Conway, Lord Gower was appointed President of the Council, and Lord Weymouth Dec. 22. Secretary of State. At the same time, the creation of a third Secretaryship of State having been found necessary, in consequence of the great increase of business con-

* Lady Hervey's Letters, p. 325. The reader can scarcely have failed to take notice how remarkably, in this passage, Lady Hervey has anticipated the beautiful simile which, seven years afterwards, Burke introduced into the eulogy which he pronounced on Charles Townshend in the House of Commons. See *ante*, p. 399.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 100; Letters, vol. v. p. 65. Some interesting particulars relating to the early life of Charles Townshend are to be found in the "*Autobiography of the Rev. Alexander Carlyle*," pp. 180, &c., 386, &c.

nected with the American Colonies, the appointment was
Feb. 27. conferred upon Lord Hillsborough with the title of Secretary of State for America.

The following brief letters written by the King in the course of the year, are not without interest:—

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"C'est avec la plus grande satisfaction que J'ay appris par la lettre de votre Majesté du 7e du courant l'heureux accouchement de la Princesse de Prusse, sa Nièce. Le vif intérêt que Je prends à tout ce que peut contribuer au bonheur de votre Majesté et de sa Famille me fait partager la joye q'elle ressent de cet événement, et m'engage à faire les vœux les plus ardens pour la continuation de la felicité de Votre Majesté et pour la prospérité de toute sa Maison Royale; et Je profite avec bien du plaisir de cette occasion de réitérer les assurances de l'estime et de l'amitié invariable avec lesquelles Je suis,

"Monsieur mon Frère,
"de Votre Majesté,
"Le bon Frère,
"GEORGE R."*

"À ST. JAMES, *ce 29 Mai*, 1767."

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"Je partage bien sincèrement et cordialement l'affliction de votre Majesté pour la mort du Prince Frederic Henry Charles de Prusse, son Neveu, que Je viens d'apprendre par votre lettre du 27me du passé. La perte d'un Prince à la fleur de son age, dont Votre Majesté avoit, à si juste titre, conçu les esperances les plus flatteuses, est un événement des plus affligeants, et en participant à Votre douleur en cette occasion, J'offre les vœux les

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6821. f. 218.

plus ardens pour la prospérité de Votre Majesté, et celle de sa Maison Royale, étant avec les sentimens d'amitié et de consideration les plus parfaits,

"Monsieur mon Frère,
"de Votre Majesté,
"Le Bon Frère,
"GEORGE R."

"A ST. JAMES, *ce* 23 *Juin*, 1767."

Endorsed—"Copie de la lettre de condoléance de S. M. Britannique à S. M. Le Roi de Prusse sur le mort de S. A. R. le Prince Frederic Henry Charles de Prusse." *

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur Mon Frère,

"J'ai reçu la lettre que Votre Majesté a bien voulu m'écrire en date du 26e Juillet pour me communiquer la célébration du mariage de sa Cousine la Princesse Louise Henriette Wilhelmine avec le Prince regnant D'Anhalt Dessau. Je partage la joye que Votre Majesté ressent à cette occasion, et en même tems que Je lui en fait mes félicitations J'offre les vœux les plus ardens pour la prospérité de cette heureuse Union, et Je prie Votre Majesté d'être persuadée que Je prendrai une part bien sincère à tout ce qui pourra contribuer à son bonheur, et à celui de sa Maison, étant avec les sentiments d'estime et d'amitié les plus parfaits,

"Monsieur mon Frère,
"Votre Bon Frère,
"GEORGE R."

"A ST. JAMES, *ce* 14 *Août*, 1767."

Endorsed by Sir Andrew Mitchell—"His Majesty's Letter to the King of Prussia on the marriage of the Princess Louisa of Brandenburg with the reigning Prince of Anhalt Dessau." †

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6821. f. 222. † *Ibid.*, 6821. f. 230.

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"C'est avec une satisfaction bien sensible que J'ai appris par la lettre de Votre Majesté, que le marriage entre sa Nièce la Princesse Frederique Sophie Guillelmine de Prusse et le Prince d'Orange et de Nassau, Stadhouder Héréditaire des Provinces Unies, a été heureusement celébré le 4e du passé; et Votre Majesté rend bien justice à mes sentiments en pensant que Je prends toute la possible à cet événement. J'offre les vœux les plus ardens pour le bonheur et pour la prospérité de cette heureuse Union, et Je prie Votre Majesté d'être persuadée du vif intérêt que Je ne cesserai de prendre à tout ce qui pourra contribuer à sa felicité, et à celle de sa Maison Royale, comme Je suis avec les sentimens d'estime et d'amitie les plus parfaits.

"Monsieur mon Frère,
"de Votre Majesté,
"Le Bon Frère,
"GEORGE R."*

"À ST. JAMES, *ce* 3 *Novembre*, 1767."

Endorsed by Sir Andrew Mitchell—"Copy of His Majesty's letter to the King of Prussia on the Marriage of the Prince of Orange."

An interval of more than three years has now elapsed since we last parted with the King and Queen in their unpopular seclusion. During that period the Queen had continued to add to the Royal Family. On the 21st of August 1765 her Majesty had been delivered of her third son, Prince William Henry, afterwards King William the Fourth; on the 29th of September 1766 she gave birth to her eldest daughter, the Princess Charlotte Augusta Matilda, afterwards Queen of Wurtemberg; on the 2nd of November 1767 was born her fourth son Edward, afterwards Duke of Kent; and on the 8th of November 1768 her second daugh-

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6821. f. 252.

ter, the Princess Sophia Augusta. On the birth of the latter Princess the King writes as follows :—

The King to Lieutenant-General Conway.

"½ p^t one, p.m.

"Lieutenant-General Conway,

"In my hurry this morning I omitted reminding the Archbishop to prepare the usual Thanksgiving, on account of the Queen's happy delivery, for Sunday next. I would have you therefore send to him for that purpose." *

The next letters communicate the birth of the Duke of Kent, the father of her present Majesty.

The King to the King of Prussia.

"Monsieur mon Frère,

"La Reine, ma chère Epouse, ayant accouchée heureusement hier à midi et demi d'un Prince, Je n'ai pas voulu différer de communiquer cet événement à Votre Majesté convaincu qu'elle partagera sincèrement la joye que J'en resseus. De mon côté Je vous prie d'être persuadée que Je suis dans les mêmes dispositions à l'egard de tout ce qui peut contribuer à Votre prospérité et à celle de Votre Maison Royale. Etant avec les sentimens d'estime et d'amitié les plus parfaits,

"Monsieur mon Frère,
"de Votre Majesté,
"Le Bon Frère,
"GEORGE R."

"À ST. JAMES, *ce* 3 *Nombre*. 1767."

Endorsed by Sir Andrew Mitchell—"Copy of His Majesty's letter to the King of Prussia on the Birth of a Prince of England." †

The King to the Queen of Prussia.

"Madame ma Sœur,

"Je m'empresse à communiquer a Votre Majesté la naissance d'un Prince dont la Reine, ma chère Epouse, accoucha heureusement hier à midi et demi. L'expérience que J'ai de la

* Brit. Mus. Egert. MS. 982. f. 3. † Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 6821. f. 243.

part que Votre Majesté prend à tout ce qui me regarde me fait espérer qu'elle s'interessera à la satisfaction que Je ressens d'un évenément aussi heureux. Je prie Votre Majesté d'être persuadée du plus sincère retour de ma part, et des vœux que Je fais pour la continuation de son bonheur et de la prospérité de sa maison. Etant avec les sentimens d'affection et d'amitié les plus invariables,

" Madame ma Sœur,
" de Votre Majesté
" Le Bon Frère,
" GEORGE R."*

"À ST. JAMES, *ce* 3 *Nov*re, 1767."

Endorsed by Sir Andrew Mitchell—"Copy of His Majesty's letter to the Queen of Prussia on the birth of a Prince of England."

But, if Heaven had blessed the King with a beautiful and increasing progeny, death, on the other hand, had not omitted to pay his visitations to the home of royalty as well as to the cottages of the poor. Less than two months after the death of that severe disciplinarian but high-minded gentleman, William Duke of Cumberland,† the funeral torches were re-lighted, the drums were again muffled, and again the organ pealed forth the "Dead March in Saul" along the vaulted roof and fretted aisles of Westminster Abbey. On this occasion, the royal tomb in the Chapel of Henry the Seventh opened to receive the remains of the fairest and most promising of his race, Prince Frederick William, the youngest son of the late Frederick Prince of Wales. Debarred by ill health and by a frail constitution from enjoying the sports and amusements congenial to his age, the gifted boy had happily found, in the society of books and in the acquirement of knowledge, a gratification which amply compensated for the absence of ruder and more sensual pleasures. Prince Frederick died on the 29th of December 1765, at the age of fifteen; and on the 17th of Septem-

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS., 6821. f. 250. † October 31, 1765.

ber 1767, his elder brother the Duke of York, a Prince of "fine lively parts" as Bishop Newton describes him,* followed him to the tomb in Westminster Abbey.

Edward Augustus Duke of York—second son of Frederick Prince of Wales, and, previously to his brother's marriage with Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz, heir-presumptive to the throne—was born on the 14th of March 1739. The principal events which marked the brief youth and manhood of this fortunate offspring of royalty may be cursorily recounted. On the 18th of March 1752, at the age of thirteen, he was elected a Knight of the Garter; on the 5th of July 1758 he entered the Navy as a Midshipman on board the "Essex;" on the 19th of June 1759, after little more than eleven months' experience at sea, he was appointed Captain of a 44-gun Frigate, the "Phœnix;" on the 9th of May 1760 he took his seat in the House of Lords as Duke of York and Albany; on the 31st of March 1761, at the age of twenty-three, he was promoted to be a Rear-Admiral, and, on the 23rd of June 1762 hoisted his Flag on board the "Princess Amelia" at Spithead.†

* Bishop's Newton's Works, vol. i. p. 126.

† Admitting the Prince's advancement in the Navy to have been somewhat too rapid, thus much at least may be said in favour of George II., that when he sent his grandson to sea it was with no provision that he should be exempted from the hardships incident to ordinary Midshipmen. Some years afterwards, Admiral Earl Howe, under whose command the Prince had first entered the Navy, writes as follows to Admiral Sir Roger Curtis;—"It is true I was not told how to provide for His Royal Highness; and all the answer I could obtain from Ministerial authority respecting the treatment of, and conduct towards, the Prince, was limited to an instruction that I was to act respecting him just as if I had not any such person on board the ship. He came, not only without bed and linen almost of every kind, but I paid also for his Uniform clothes, which I provided for him with all other necessaries, at Portsmouth."—"Captain Howe," writes Sir John Barrow, "having equipped his young *élève* in the true Portsmouth fashion, the captains of the Navy then present attended him in their boats on board, where they were severally introduced to the young Midshipman. An anecdote is told, which, being highly characteristic of the true simplicity of seamen, is not unlikely to have occurred. A sailor, standing with some others on the forecastle, and observing what was going on, whispered his messmate,—'The young gentleman a'nt over-civil as I thinks: look if he don't keep his hat on before all the captains!'—'Why, you stupid lubber,' replied the other, 'where should he learn manners, seeing as how he never was at sea before?'" *Barrow's Life of Earl*

Though far less tractable than his more serious brother, George the Third, the Duke of York seems in his boyhood to have been much more popular with his family. As he advanced in years, indeed, his open ridicule of his mother's favourite, Lord Bute, and his precocious interference in politics, seem to have given equal offence to the Princess Dowager and to the King.* Nevertheless, we have not only evidence that George the Third continued to entertain a strong affection for his volatile brother, but, nearly thirty years after the death of the Duke, we find his sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, speaking affectionately of him as her "favourite brother." †

Brief as was the career of the Duke of York in the Navy, it was not an undistinguished one. On the 1st of August 1758 he sailed under Commodore Howe in the "Essex" for Cherbourg, where he bore a part in the capture of that town and the destruction of its strongly fortified basin. "The fleet," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann on the 24th, "is now off Portland, expecting orders for landing or proceeding. Prince Edward gave the ladies a ball, and told them he was too young to know what was good-breeding in France, therefore he should behave as he should if meaning to please in England—and kissed them all." ‡

In the following month the young Prince was engaged in the disastrous affair at St. Cas, where he behaved with the proverbial valour of his race. The British army, after the capture of Cherbourg, had been successfully re-landed about two leagues to the westward of St. Malo, but, in con-

Howe, pp. 58—9. With regard to the views of George III. on this subject when he placed his third son, William Henry, afterwards King William IV., in the Navy at the age of thirteen, see Sir John Barrow's *Autobiography*, p. 379.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. i. pp. 63, 140; Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 50. Ed. 1857.

† Lord Malmesbury's Diaries, vol. iii. p. 150, 2nd Edition.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 165.

sequence of the rapid approach of a superior French force under the command of the Duc d'Aiguillon, found it expedient to return to their ships with as little delay as possible. While thus employed, the enemy suddenly descended from the high grounds and fell upon the rear-guard, most of whom, after the performance of heroic acts of gallantry, were cut to pieces. General Dury and ten other officers lost their lives. The total loss in killed and prisoners amounted to a thousand men, including four naval captains who, while assisting in the re-embarkation, fell into the hands of the enemy. Sept. 11, 1758.

Before the Duke of York had completed his eighteenth year, we find him not only launched into the gay vortex of pleasure and fashion, and pursuing one libertine amour after another, but indulging in every kind of dissipation which was calculated either to ruin his health or to impair the credit of the Royal Family. The lady whose charms first attracted his roving fancy appears to have been Charlotte Countess of Essex, daughter of the celebrated poet and wit, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. On the 30th of January 1757, Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann;—"Sir Charles's daughter, Lady Essex, has engaged the attentions of Prince Edward, who has got his liberty, seems extremely disposed to use it, and has great life and good humour: she has already made a ball for him." Again, Walpole writes on the 13th of February following;—"Prince Edward's pleasures continue to furnish conversation. He has been rather forbid by the *Signora Madre*,* to make himself so common; and he has been rather encouraged by his grandfather to disregard the prohibition. The other night the Duke [of Cumberland] and he were at a ball at Lady Rochford's. She and Lady Essex were singing in an inner chamber when the princes entered, who insisted on a repetition of the song. My Lady Essex, instead of continuing the same,

* The Princess Dowager.

addressed herself to Prince Edward in this ballad of Lord Dorset;—

'False friends I have, as well as you,
Who daily counsel me
Fame and ambition to pursue,
And leave off loving thee.'" *

From Lady Essex the Duke transferred his affections to the youthful Duchess of Richmond, † the sister-in-law of his brother's passion, Lady Sarah Lennox. To George Montague Horace Walpole writes on the 26th of April 1759;—"The ball at Mr. Conolly's ‡ was by no means delightful. The house is small: it was hot, and composed of young Irish. I was retiring when they went to supper, but was fetched back to sup with Prince Edward and the Duchess of Richmond, who is his present passion. He had *chattered* as much love to her as would serve ten balls. The conversation turned on the 'Guardian.' Most unfortunately the Prince asked her if she should like Mr. Clackit? 'No, indeed, Sir,' said the Duchess. Lord Tavistock burst out into a loud laugh, and I am afraid none of the company quite kept their countenances." §

Of the Prince's many love-affairs, the most serious would seem to have been his attachment for the once celebrated Lady Mary Coke, to whom it has been asserted that he was under an engagement of marriage. Lady Mary Campbell, daughter of John second Duke of Argyle, had at an early age become the wife of Edward Viscount Coke, only son of

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. pp. 60, 62. Lady Essex survived the date of this letter only seventeen months. She died in childbed at an early age on the 19th of July 1759.

† Mary, daughter of Charles Bruce, third Earl of Aylesbury. She married, 1 April 1757, Charles third Duke of Richmond, and died, without issue, 8th November 1796.

‡ Thomas Conolly, Esq., of Castletown in the county of Kildare, had married, on the 30th of the preceding December, Lady Augusta Louisa Lennox, sister of the Duke of Richmond.

§ Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 221.

Thomas Earl of Leicester. Lord Coke had left her a widow in 1755, when, in the words of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, she found herself "the envy of her sex, in the possession of youth, health, wealth, wit, beauty, and liberty." * Distinguished among her contemporaries, by her many eccentricities, her inordinate ambition, and a strong propensity to play the part of a tragedy-queen, she nevertheless appears to have been a generous, virtuous, high-spirited, and warm-hearted woman. According to some extempore verses composed by her friend, Lady Temple—

> "She sometimes laughs, but never loud;
> She's handsome too, but somewhat proud;
> At court she bears away the bell;
> She dresses fine, and figures well:
> With decency she's gay and airy;
> Who can this be but Lady Mary?" †

Another of Lady Mary's weaknesses was the extravagant courtship which she paid to royal personages. "If all the sovereigns in Europe," writes Walpole, "combined to slight her, she still would put her trust in the next generation of princes." ‡ It was probably this passion for royalty which induced her to encourage the dangerous addresses of a young and ardent Prince of the Blood, of whom, during his life-time, she always spoke as being her betrothed, and at whose early death she displayed every appearance of immoderate grief. §

The latest passion of the fickle Duke appears to have been Anne, sister of Sir Francis Blake Delaval, and wife of Sir William Stanhope, whom she seems to have detested, and from whom she lived apart. The last occasion apparently on which they ever met was on their return from the

* Lady M. Wortley Montague's Letters, vol. iii. p. 108.

† Grenville Papers, vol. ii. p. 42.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 21. Ed. 1857. See also the Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany, vol. ii. p. 23, 2nd Series.

§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 361. Lady Mary survived till 1811.

Continent, when Sir William took leave of her at Blackheath, being engaged to pay a visit to his brother, Lord Chesterfield. "Madam," he said, as he alighted from the carriage, "I hope I shall never see your face again."—"Sir," was the lady's reply, "I will take all the care I can that you shall not." * The passion of the Duke of York for Lady Stanhope was encouraged by her profligate and intriguing brother, Sir Francis Delaval, who, believing his brother-in-law, Sir William, to be in a dying state, had formed the ambitious project of marrying her to the brother of his Sovereign. Accordingly, taking advantage of the taste of the Duke and his sister for private theatricals, he caused a pretty little theatre to be constructed at Westminster, as the means of throwing them constantly into each other's society. The favourite piece was the "Fair Penitent," in which the Duke performed the part of Lothario; Sir Francis that of Horatio, and Lady Stanhope, it is needless to add, that of Calista. † This ambitious project, however, was unexpectedly cut short by the death of the Duke, who expired at Monaco under the following melancholy circumstances.

The young Prince was enjoying the hospitalities and festivities of Paris, on his intended route to the military camp at Compiégne, when, information having reached him that a lady whom he affected to admire was at Genoa, he suddenly altered his intentions and forthwith took his departure for Italy. On the road he was entertained by the Duc de Villars with a ball at his country-house between Aix and Marseilles. The Prince, it appears, danced all night, and as soon as the ball was finished, although in a violent perspiration, insisted on getting into

* Walpole's Letters, vol. iv. pp. 110-1.

† Memoirs of William Lovell Edgeworth, by himself, vol. i. p. 119, 2nd edition. In these Memoirs will be found a curious account of Sir Francis Delaval, vol. i. p. 116, &c. See also, in relation to Lady Stanhope and the gay society in which she moved, *Cradock's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 82; *Selwyn Corresp.*, vol. ii. pp. 49, 117; Kirkman's Life of Macklin, vol. i. pp. 336, 463; *Gray and Mason Corresp.*, pp. 385, 529.

his carriage and proceeding on his journey. The following day, on reaching Marseilles, he was seized with chilliness and shivering, notwithstanding which he continued his journey to Monaco. The day after his arrival at that place he was unable to leave his bed. His immoderate addiction to pleasure, the excitement produced in his system, partly by the succession of balls and banquets with which he had been entertained at Paris, and partly by the rapidity with which he was in the habit of travelling from place to place, had aggravated a disorder which might not otherwise have proved fatal. For fourteen days he continued to linger in a state of great suffering, alleviated in some degree, by the affectionate offices, not only of the gentlemen of his Household, Colonels St. John and Morison and Captain Wrottesley,* but by the most touching kindness on the part of the Prince of Monaco. Colonel Morison being ill himself, it was not without much difficulty that the dying Prince could be prevailed upon to accept his services. "Your life, Morison," he said, "is of more importance than mine. You have a family. Be careful of your health for their sakes." When, two days before his death, the Duke sent for the Prince of Monaco to thank him for all his attentions, the latter was not only so overcome by his feelings as to burst into tears, but was compelled to withdraw from the apartment without speaking. †

The Duke met his end with pious resolution. On the day preceding his death he dictated to Colonel St. John a penitential letter to the King his brother, in which he prayed his forgiveness for any act of disobedience which he might have committed, and entreated him to take his servants under his protection. Colonel St. John he would have especially recommended by name, but the latter

* Afterwards Sir John Wrottesley, Baronet; M.P. for the county of Stafford, and a Major-General in the Army. He died April 23, 1787.

† Annual Register for 1767, pp. 131—2; London Gazette for 29 September, 1767.

modestly begged to be exempted from inditing his own eulogiums. "Sir," he said, "if the letter were written by your Royal Highness yourself, I should feel your kindness most deeply; but I cannot name myself." The next day, the Duke, feeling his dissolution drawing near, took an affectionate farewell of the gentlemen of his Household whom he had ordered to be summoned to his bed-side. The last words which he uttered seem to have been addressed to Murray, his page. "Ah! Murray," he said, "you will soon lose your master." *

The Duke of York expired on the 17th of September 1767, at the early age of twenty-eight. On the evening of that day his remains were removed on board the British ship of war, "Montreal;" the batteries of Monaco saluting them with the same number of guns with which it was customary to honour a Marshal of France. On Colonel St. John devolved the dismal duty of attending his master's corpse to Westminster Abbey; Colonel Wrottesley having preceded him overland for the purpose of announcing the melancholy intelligence to the royal family.

Notwithstanding the libertinism and folly which marked the brief career of the Duke of York, he was evidently not devoid of more amiable qualities. Bishop Newton, who had been intimately acquainted with him, and who pauses in his Memoirs to lament over his premature death, expresses his conviction that had he "outlived the years of dissipation, he would have proved an honour to his King and country." † By his personal friends and followers he was certainly much beloved. "I am sure you felt for me," writes Colonel St. John to George Selwyn, "on hearing of the whole melancholy transaction. How much the dis-

* Annual Register for 1767, pp. 133—4; Walpole's Letters, vol. v. pp. 65—66; Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 103. See also *Grenville Papers*, vol. iv. pp. 168, 169.

† Bishop Newton's Works, vol. i. p. 126.

agreeable reflection of the loss I had sustained must have been heightened by the remains of my master being constantly under my eyes, during a voyage of eight hundred leagues—the whole time of which I was constantly out of order, and vomited almost every day—I will leave you to form a competent guess." * Colonel Wrottesley, too, is said to have been constantly in tears during his mournful journey from Monaco to London. "The Papers," writes Miss Mary Townshend, "are full of pathetic accounts of the Duke of York's death. He wrote a letter to the King expressing great uneasiness at their having parted on ill terms, which I hear the King was very much moved with reading; but I know nothing of his will. It is said Calista has been in fits ever since the sad news came." †

The principal event which marked the month of February 1768, was the return to England, after an absence of nearly five years in France, of the celebrated John Wilkes. In the interim he had been convicted of the double offence of publishing Number 45 of the North Briton and printing his infamous poem the Essay on Woman; and, having failed to make his appearance and receive judgment, sentence of outlawry had been passed upon him. During the period which had since elapsed, he had twice made ineffectual appeals—once to Lord Rockingham and the second time to the Duke of Grafton—for a reversal of the sentence. Twice also, during that time, he had been bold enough to visit England for the purpose of personally pressing his suit, and on each occasion had been allowed by the Government to return to the Continent unmolested. The Rockingham Administration, indeed, had been complaisant enough to purchase the forbearance of the demagogue by subscribing for him a few hundred pounds among themselves, which were presented to him by Edmund Burke, then private Secretary to

Feb. 21, 1764.

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. ii. p. 192. † *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 187.

May, 1766. the first Lord of the Treasury, Lord Rockingham. * Even so late as the year 1773, we find Wilkes still drawing on the purses of at least three of the great Whig Lords, the Dukes of Devonshire and Portland, and the Marquis of Rockingham. †

The cherished object of Wilkes,—next to obtaining a pardon from the Crown and a reversal of his outlawry—was to wring from Ministers a lucrative appointment under Government. To his friend Humphrey Cotes he coolly writes on the 4th of December 1765—"If the Ministers do not find employment for me, I am disposed to find employment for them." ‡ Failing, however, in this object—his pecuniary means being almost exhausted, and his creditors in Paris becoming inconveniently urgent for the liquidation of their claims—the adventurer resolved at all hazards to fix his abode in his native country, although with no higher object, it is to be feared, than that of refilling his empty coffers, by betaking himself to his former profitable calling of a patriot. It was his opinion, as he wrote to his friend Humphrey Cotes, that Ministers "dare not to let law take place," inasmuch as persecution in his case would inevitably lead to popular tumults, far more formidable than the "Weavers' Riots."

The patriot, on his arrival in England, addressed three several communications to three very different persons. To his friend Almon he writes on the 7th of February—"I am at Mr. Hayley's, in Great Alie Street, Goodman's-fields, where I shall be glad to see you." To the Solicitor of the Treasury he sent a written notice pledging his word as a gentleman to present himself at the Court of King's Bench on the first day of the ensuing term; and lastly he addressed a letter to his Sovereign in which he attributed his misfor-

* Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. pp. 152, 153.
† Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. pp. 236, 237.
‡ Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. ii. p. 218.

tunes to the oppressive and vindictive treatment which he had experienced from former Ministers, and entreated his Majesty to pardon and permit him to remain in his native country. This latter communication was in itself sufficiently respectful and even submissive, but, whether by design or from ignorance of etiquette, it was not only addressed to the King in the first person, but, instead of being transmitted through the proper channel, the Secretary of State, was delivered by Wilkes's footman at the door of Buckingham House.* In the mean time, notwithstanding Wilkes had recently published a very offensive attack upon Lord Chatham, in the form of a letter to the Duke of Grafton,† no attempt had as yet been made to take him into custody. Mar. 4.

The time selected by the half-forgotten demagogue for his return to England was the eve of a general Election; a season alike well adapted to recall him to the recollection of his fellow-countrymen and to afford him an opportunity of recovering his former popularity. With his usual audacity he plunged at once into the thick of politics. Notwithstanding there were already in the field six candidates for the representation of the City of London, he commenced his canvass as a seventh. He failed, indeed, in carrying the election, but in other respects his defeat was almost tantamount to success. The show of hands on the day of nomination was in his favour; nearly thirteen hundred liverymen voted for his election; and, lastly, at the close of the poll, the populace removed the horses from his carriage, and drew him in triumph from Guildhall to his residence.‡ Mar. 21.

Encouraged by these evidences of popular favour, Wilkes now declared himself a candidate for the representation of the county of Middlesex in Parliament. By the masses of

* Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iii. pp. 237, 263, 269. Annual Register for 1768, pp. 83, 84.

† 12 December 1767; Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iii. p. 184.

‡ Annual Register for 1768, p. 82.

the people, the announcement was greeted with enthusiasm, and by the majority of the electors with satisfaction. On the day that the election commenced, an extraordinary
Mar. 28. excitement prevailed. At an early hour in the morning the turnpike roads, and other thoroughfares leading to Brentford, were taken possession of by his admirers. Those persons only were permitted to pass, who either wore in their hats a blue cockade, or else a ticket inscribed with "Wilkes and No. 45." One of the rival candidates, Sir William Beauchamp Proctor,* had his carriage broken to pieces, while another obnoxious person, Mr. Cooke, son of the City Marshal, was pelted at Hyde Park Corner and thrown from his horse. "Squinting Wilkes and Liberty," writes Gilly Williams to George Selwyn, "are everything with us. It is scarce safe to go to the other side of Temple Bar without having that obliquity of vision." So familiar were the words "Wilkes and Liberty" to every ear, that a wit of the day commenced one of his letters—"I take the Wilkes and Liberty to assure you," &c.†

But, if the attitude of the mob had been threatening during the day-time, it became much more alarming at night. Every available constable had been despatched to keep order at Brentford, and consequently, when darkness set in, London may almost be said to have been at the mercy of the rabble. In Piccadilly many private carriages were stopped. "No. 45" was scratched upon the panels, and even ladies were forced to alight and shout for Wilkes and Liberty. In each street that was visited by the mob, the windows of every house that was not illuminated were broken. The mansions of Lord Bute in South Audley Street, and of Lord Egmont in Pall Mall, were furiously

* Sir William Beauchamp Proctor, K.B., of Langley Park, Norfolk, had represented the county of Middlesex in Parliament since the year 1747. His death took place in 1773, at the age of fifty-one.

† Selwyn Corresp., vol. ii. p. 275; Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 111.

attacked, but happily without the assailants being able to effect an entrance. At Northumberland House, the mob not only compelled the Duke to treat them with liquor, but forced him to make his appearance and to drink the health of their idol. This licentious conduct on the part of the populace, and the repeated insults offered to the King's Government and Crown, could scarcely fail to excite the indignation of the young and high-spirited monarch. When some one about his person expressed apprehension lest the Queen's House should be attacked in the course of the night—"He only wished," he said, "that the rioters would make the attempt, in order that he might have an opportunity of dispersing them at the head of his Guards."*

On the following night, although the streets were somewhat better protected, the greatest alarm continued to prevail. In consequence of the beautiful Duchess of Hamilton boldly refusing to illuminate, the doors and shutters of her residence were battered for three hours, though happily without effect. Another outrage perpetrated by the mob was on the person of the Austrian Ambassador, the stiff and pompous Count Seilern, who to his great indignation was forced from his coach, and subjected to the affront of having "No. 45" chalked upon the soles of his shoes. "He complained in form of the insult," writes Walpole, "but it was as difficult for Ministers to help laughing as to give him redress." †

In the mean time, the Guards on duty at St. James's had been kept in readiness to march at beat of drum. Happily, however, the wise precautions taken by the new Secretary of State, Lord Weymouth, prevented the necessity of shedding blood.

* Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 268.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 186—190.

*The King to Viscount Weymouth.**

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *March* 29th, 1768, ½ p^t 4.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I am this moment returned, and cannot resist expressing my approbation at the discretion you have used that mischief may be prevented this evening. I shall be glad to see you whenever most convenient to you." †

The result of the Middlesex Election was the triumphant return of Wilkes to Parliament at the head of the Poll.

About ten weeks had elapsed since the arrival of the pseudo-patriot in England when, on the 20th of April, agreeably with his promise, he surrendered himself at the Court of King's Bench. It was, however, objected by the Court that the accused had not been brought under its cognisance conformably with the usual and proper legal process, and accordingly, notwithstanding his identity was freely admitted by Wilkes himself—notwithstanding the fact of his outlawry was unquestioned, and that the Attorney-General on the part of the Crown pressed for his commitment—he was ordered to be set at liberty. "Westminster Hall," writes Walpole, "was garrisoned by constables, and Horse and Foot Guards were ready to support them." No attempt, however, to break the peace was made by the vast multitude which had assembled in the neighbourhood. ‡

The events of the next few days were looked forward to by the King and the Government, as well as by the public, with the greatest interest. It had been conjectured by many persons that Wilkes, if not previously arrested by the myrmidons of the law, would again surrender himself on the 26th; but the day passed away without his making his appearance. The Sheriffs' officers, it seems, had been afraid

* Thomas Thynne, third Viscount Weymouth, born September 13th, 1734, had previously held the appointment of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from April 30, 1765, to July following. On June 3rd, 1778, he was elected a Knight of the Garter, and on August 18th, 1789, was created Marquis of Bath. He died November 19th, 1796.

† MS. original.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 98. Ed. 1857. Annual Register for 1768, p. 96.

to execute their warrant, while Wilkes, on his part, appears to have had private reasons of his own for keeping out of the way of Justice for a day or two. In the mean time we find the King addressing the following communications to his Ministers :—

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Queen's House, *April 25th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{48}$ p. 7, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Your caution in renewing the former directions for the peace of the town is most seasonable, as the parties might otherwise have fallen into their usual state of negligence. The Attorney-General's letter makes me imagine that Mr. Wilkes will not surrender himself; therefore your having afresh insisted on the utmost being done to seize him, seems absolutely necessary. I cannot conclude without expressing my sorrow that so mean a set of men as the Sheriffs' Officers can, either from timidity or interestedness, frustrate a due exertion of the law. If he is not soon secured, I wish you would inquire whether there is no legal method of quickening the zeal of the Sheriffs themselves." *

The King to Lord North.

"*25th April*, 1768.

"Though entirely confiding in your attachment to my person, as well as in your hatred of every lawless proceeding, yet I think it highly proper to apprize you that the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes [from the House of Commons] appears to be very essential, and must be effected. The case of Mr. Ward,† in the reign of my great-grandfather, seems to point out the proper method of proceeding. If any man were capable of forgetting his criminal writings, his speech in court last Wednesday would be reason enough, for he declared [No.] 45 a Paper that the Author might glory in, and the blasphemous Poem a mere ludicrous production."‡

* MS. original.

† John Ward, having been convicted of forgery, was expelled from the House of Commons in the month of May 1727.

‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 67. Ed. 1858. Wilkes had been allowed to address the Court of Queen's Bench in his self-defence on his being set at liberty on the 20th of April.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *April 27th*, 1768, ¾ p^t 7, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Your having sent immediately to the Attorney-General to know what subsequent steps ought to be taken on Mr. Wilkes being secured, is highly proper. I shall be impatient to see his answer."*

Apr. 27. It was in the course of the day, on which this note was written, that Wilkes thought proper to allow himself to be arrested by the Officers of Justice, by whom he was formally carried as a prisoner before the Court of King's Bench. Bail to an ample amount was offered as security for his re-appearance by his friend Humphrey Cotes, but the Court, instead of accepting it, ordered his committal to the King's Bench Prison.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *April 27th*, 1768, ¾ p^t 7, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Though I am conscious of your having taken every prudential measure to secure the peace of the Town during the whole of this strange affair, yet I cannot help suggesting your directing a very careful eye to be kept on the King's Bench Prison, as I see by your note that Mr. Wilkes has been sent there by the Court."†

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

[No date.]

"Lord Weymouth,

"The aversion Mr. Wilkes has publicly declared to being imprisoned, added to his not possessing one grain of prudence, makes me strongly of opinion that he will not be very active in attempting to persuade the mob to suffer him to be conducted to the King's Bench Prison. Your conduct on this day deserves great commendation, as well as during the whole of this unheard-of proceeding." ‡

* MS. original. † *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.*

In the mean time, the Duke of Grafton and his colleagues had committed a grievous error. Either they should have taken into their consideration the services which Wilkes had formerly rendered to the cause of liberty, as well as his long exile and the consequent ruin of his affairs, and have recommended the King to extend to him a full and gracious pardon, or else, if satisfied that his offences against religion and good government merited condign punishment, they should have arrested him immediately on his return to England, and, without allowing him a single day to ply his old trade of agitation, have handed him over to the legal powers. Unquestionably of the two alternatives the former was the preferable one. Of late, for instance, during Wilkes' exile in France his name had almost sunk into oblivion. When, on his return to England, he had visited Bath, his arrival had scarcely attracted the slightest attention;* and, lastly, when he had been put in nomination to represent the city of London in Parliament, although the number of votes which he commanded was considerable, only one citizen of eminence and wealth, Alderman Baker, had come forward to urge his claims. "When Wilkes," writes Walpole, "first arrived in town I had seen him pass before my window in a hackney-chair attended but by a dozen children and women. Now all Westminster was in a riot." Nor, if Ministers had chosen the merciful side of the question, would they have laid themselves open to any very heavy charges of inconsistency. Wilkes, in former days, had lived on intimate terms with Lord Chatham; Lord Sandwich had been his boon companion and intimate friend; and, lastly, the Duke of Grafton, while the demagogue, in 1763, was undergoing imprisonment for a libel on his Sovereign, had made no scruple of honouring him with a personal visit.† "Re-

* Walpole'sReign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 194.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 278.

member, my Lord," writes Junius to the Duke, "that you continued your connexion with Mr. Wilkes long after he had been convicted of those crimes, which you have since taken pains to represent in the blackest colours of blasphemy and treason." *

The arguments in favour of pardoning Wilkes—arguments which the Duke of Grafton freely admits in his Memoirs that neither he nor his colleagues had the sagacity to perceive,†—ought to have been sufficiently apparent. Not only would a pardon have robbed him of that popularity which was destined to prove so perilous to the State, but Ministers, by meriting the gratitude of Wilkes, might have converted a formidable foe into a convenient friend. But even assuming that Wilkes, notwithstanding the mercy extended to him, would have persisted in advocating democratic principles and measures, the impending conflict between order and disorder would at least have been fought—not, as afterwards happened, in the blood-stained precincts of the King's Bench Prison, nor under the windows of the King's palace—but in the peaceful arena of St. Stephen's Chapel, a place in which experience had already shown that, neither as an orator nor as a debater, was Wilkes likely to prove a very formidable opponent.‡ Ministers, however, as we have seen, were bent on a suicidal policy, the fatal effects of which were

* Letter to the Duke of Grafton, 10th April, 1769.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, p. 199, *note*.

‡ Horace Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann on the 31st of March;—"In my own opinion, the House of Commons is the place where he can do the least hurt, for he is a wretched speaker, and will sink to contempt, like Admiral Vernon, who I remember just such an illuminated hero, with two birth-days in one year." Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 93. It may be mentioned that, at a later period, a proposition was made by the Duke of Grafton to the King to extend a free pardon to Wilkes. But it was now too late. The dignity of the Crown had become compromised by the pretensions and lawless proceedings of Wilkes and his followers, and consequently a boon which, if granted in the first instance, would have been regarded as a gracious act of royal clemency, would have been attributed by the public to the fears and weakness of the Government. See the *Grenville Papers*, vol. iv. p. 273.

almost immediately made manifest. For instance, no sooner was the fact of Wilkes' committal to prison announced to the vast crowd of people which, on the day of that event, filled the precincts of Westminster Hall, than they assumed an attitude which was significant enough of the disorder and anarchy which were destined to follow. The hackney-coach, in which he was driven off, in custody of the Marshal of the King's Bench, was followed by an excited crowd, heaping blessings on his head, and venting curses and revilings against Ministers. The King proved to be right in his conjecture that the people would interpose to prevent their idol being carried to prison; though he was wrong in his presumption that Wilkes would take advantage of their interference. He permitted the mob, indeed, to remove the horses from his coach on Westminster Bridge and to draw him to a tavern on Cornhill, which he entered; but, so soon as an opportunity offered, he effected his escape in disguise by a back door, and, to the great satisfaction of the Marshal of the King's Bench, delivered himself up a prisoner at the gate. The King, however, would seem to have given him little credit for good intentions.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I thank you for the attention of sending me the Attorney-General's letter. I am surprised Mr. Wilkes should be so ill-advised as to let violence be used to prevent the officers of Justice performing the duties of their office."*

From this period till the assembling of Parliament, when affairs grew much worse, London continued to be in a state of constant fermentation and alarm. Tumultuous crowds assembled daily in front of the King's Bench Prison. On May 10.

* MS. original.

one occasion the Guards had to disperse them by the light of a bonfire composed of the wooden railings wrenched from the neighbouring foot-ways. Moreover, many other breaches of the peace took place in different parts of the metropolis.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *April 30th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{12}$ p^t 10, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The letter from Mr. Ponton,* gives me great pleasure, as it shows the Justices have conducted themselves with proper spirit. If these tumultuous assemblies continue before the King's Bench Prison, it is worthy of consideration whether the Attorney-General ought not to move the Court that Mr. Wilkes be removed to the Tower, where the like illegal concourse will be effectually prevented, without harassing the troops. If a due firmness is shewn with regard to this audacious criminal, this affair will prove a fortunate one, by restoring a due obedience to the laws. But if this is not the case, I fear anarchy will continue till what every temperate man must dread, *I mean an effusion of blood*, has vanquished." †

This latter expression of the King may, at first sight, appear of a harsh, if not of a cruel character; nor is it the only occasion on which we shall find him urging upon the Home Secretary, and, through the Home Secretary, upon the Magistrates of the metropolis, the propriety of upholding the cause of property and good order, even at the painful expense of bringing the military in collision with the people. Whether the young, and truly kind-hearted monarch, in thus courageously taking this painful and awful responsibility upon himself, deserved the execrations of his people, or whether, on the other hand, he merited their warmest acknowledgments, must be left to the judgment of those who will take the trouble to recall to mind the terrible instances in which a feeling of false humanity has, at times, left a

* Chairman for the Justices of the Peace for Southwark. See *Sir H. Cavendish's Parl. Debates*, vol. i. p. 617.

† MS. original.

peaceful and wealthy capital to be ravaged and desolated by a licentious rabble; and further how unfortunate was the condition of the King in not only being deprived, at so critical a time, of the guidance and support of Lord Chatham, but in having no better advisers to consult with than his present supine, if not intimidated, Ministers. For instance, at the worst crisis of the riots, the Lord Chancellor and the Duke of Grafton had thought proper "to retire out of town." "The Prime Minister," writes Junius—"in a rural retirement and in the arms of faded beauty*—had lost all memory of his sovereign, his country, and himself." † Moreover it was not alone from the violence of Wilkes's worshippers that danger threatened the metropolis and the country at large. Other riots, consequent on the scarcity of food and the combinations of various trades for higher wages, were constantly taking place. "We have independent mobs," writes Walpole, "that have nothing to do with Wilkes, and who only take advantage of so favourable a season. The dearness of provisions incites—the hope of increase of wages allures—and drink puts them in motion. The coal-heavers began; and it is well it is not a hard frost, for they have stopped all coals coming to town. The sawyers rose, too, and at last the sailors, who have committed great outrages in merchant-ships and prevented their sailing." ‡

The strike of the sailors threatened to become a very serious affair. The spectacle of four thousand mutinous men, suddenly let loose upon society and parading the streets with their flags and ensigns flying, was undoubtedly sufficient to spread consternation over a city which, so far as the strength of its constabulary force was concerned, may almost be said to have been unprotected, and which

* The once celebrated courtesan, Nancy Parsons.

† Letter to the Duke of Grafton, 24 April 1769. Grenville Corresp., vol. iv. p. 268.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 99.

had already been half frightened from its propriety by the proceedings of Wilkes and his lawless followers. The King himself, it will be perceived, received a visit from the seamen at Richmond Lodge.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Richmond Lodge, *May 7th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{75}$ p^t 4, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Your attention in acquainting me with the riot there has been last night on the River, from a demand of the sailors for an advance of wages, meets with my thorough approbation. I find they have just passed Kew Bridge, and have in consequence ordered the gates to be shut, and the Guards to keep every thing quiet. I have ordered the servants to say I am out, not liking, by giving any answers, to encourage these acts of licentiousness.

"I shall be desirous of knowing how the Court of King's Bench have determined the case of the outlawry, and hope every means have been used to make the magistrates exert themselves, [to prevent] in case of its being declared void, any illegal assemblies, if the mob should attempt to renew this passion for lighting up the town." *

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Richmond Lodge, *May 7th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{10}$ p^t 6, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The sailors have been here. The servants, according to my orders, acquainted them that I was out, at which they expressed much concern. On being asked their business, they said it was for an increase of wages. They were told that I had no power to act in this affair, which they readily owned; said they were fools for walking so far, and that they would go back to London; but begged the petition might be given me when I came home, as it was a proof that, though they were wrongly advised in addressing themselves to me, they looked upon me as having the welfare of the British Sailors at heart." †

* MS. original. The mob, on the 28th ultimo, had compelled the inhabitants of the Borough to illuminate their houses, but at midnight were dispersed by a detachment of the Guards.

† MS. original.

The next communication from the King is dated the 9th, the day before the re-assembling of Parliament. As that important time drew near, the more anxious the King naturally became lest the irresolution of his Ministers, or the timidity of the magistrates, might lead to the temporary triumph of disorder and rapine.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"RICHMOND LODGE, *May 9th*, 1768, $\frac{7}{12}$ p^{t} 6, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Your indefatigable attention to preserving the peace of the capital is highly praiseworthy. Should it be thought advisable on this occasion to issue any Proclamation, or any Order in Council, I am ready to come at the shortest notice and at any hour. I cannot conclude without strongly recommending the Justices, if they call the troops to their assistance, should show that vigour which alone makes them respected." *

On the following day, the disorders anticipated by the King unhappily took place. In the hope that the incarcerated patriot would be allowed to take his seat in Parliament, a vast concourse of people assembled round the King's Bench and in St. George's Fields, for the purpose of welcoming him as he passed. At length, the day having pretty far advanced, and the popular idol having failed to make his appearance, the disappointment of the mob was converted into rage. With loud yells and threats, they demanded him at the prison gates, and in other respects conducted themselves in a menacing and riotous manner. It was in vain that the magistrates entreated them to disperse; and accordingly no alternative was left but to read the Riot Act, and to summon the presence of the military. These measures, however, instead of assuaging, inflamed the fury of the people. During the reading of the Act the magistrates were hissed, hooted, and

* MS. original.

even pelted. The drums now beat to arms, but so far were the multitude from being overawed by the sound, that they commenced attacking the soldiers with stones, brickbats, and other missiles. One young man, who had displayed particular activity and vindictiveness in these irritating assaults, and whose person chanced to be easily distinguishable by his wearing a red waistcoat, was pursued by Ensign Murray and three private soldiers into a neighbouring cow-shed, through which he had the luck to effect his escape. Most unfortunately, as it happened, there proved to be another young man in the shed, one of the name of Allen, who, from the circumstance of his also wearing a red waistcoat, was mistaken for the real delinquent by the soldiers, one of whom fired at and shot him dead. "Thus," in the words of the clergyman who preached his funeral sermon, "fell a valuable and well-disposed young creature, the comfort of his parents, the delight of his friends, whose life and conversation were truly inoffensive!" *

This melancholy accident, by increasing the fury and violence of the mob, brought affairs to so alarming a crisis, that at length one of the magistrates, Mr. Gillman, felt it his imperative duty to order the military to fire; the result being that five or six persons were killed and fifteen wounded, two of the latter being unfortunately women. This severe act of justice produced, as might be expected, the effect of scattering the multitude, who, however, instead of dispersing quietly to their homes, contrived to carry off with them the dead body of Allen, which they bore, amidst loud lamentations and execrations, through the streets. When, on a later day, the remains of the unhappy youth were lowered into the grave, it was in the presence of a silent but infuriated multitude of people, and attended by a theatrical parade which was only too well calculated

* Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iii. p. 279, *note*.

to increase the already half-frenzied state of popular feeling.

While the King's Bench was thus the scene of the riots we have described, another formidable concourse of people had assembled in Old and New Palace Yard, Westminster, with the openly avowed intention of forcing their way into the House of Commons and of dispersing, if not maltreating its members. This indignity, thus proposed to be offered to the assembled Parliament of Great Britain, seems to have completely exhausted the patience of the King, and decided him upon at once hastening from Richmond to London.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"RICHMOND LODGE, *May 10th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{10}$ p^t 6, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"This continuation of collections of the populace has a greater appearance of plan than any I ever remember before. I therefore, in the most earnest manner, require that the Justices be told to show the vigor in Westminster that has been this day at the King's Bench Prison. Bloodshed is not what I delight in, but it seems to me the only way of restoring a due obedience to the laws. I have just seen the paper, that was distributed to-day, recommending the driving the Commons out of their House, which they, for their own sakes, are bound to take notice of. I shall with pleasure sign any proclamation that can tend to restore order to this country, formerly looked upon as the seat of Liberty, which has now degenerated into licentiousness. I mean to come instantly to town, and wish to see you about nine at the Queen's House." *

Happily, the terrible chastisement which had been inflicted in St. George's Fields had the effect, for a time, of restoring peace to the metropolis. On the following day, indeed, a formidable body of sailors presented themselves with a petition at the doors of Parliament; but having been

* MS. original.

informed that their marching with flags was an illegal procedure, they not only flung them away, but after raising a cheer for the King and Parliament, actually attacked and drove Wilkes's mob from the field.*

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"RICHMOND LODGE, *May 15th*, 1768.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I take the opportunity of a servant's going to town, to express my satisfaction at the account you sent me last night of the sailors having come to their senses. This gives me the more pleasure, as it would otherwise have been necessary to have come to violent measures of releasing the ships, which might, at the same time, have caused much mischief." †

On the 8th of June, the case of Wilkes was argued before Lord Mansfield in the Court of King's Bench, and on the 18th judgment was formally delivered. While, on the one hand, the Court reversed his outlawry, it otherwise affirmed its former verdicts. For having published No. 45 of the North Briton he was sentenced to be imprisoned for twelve calendar months—computed from the day on which he had been committed to prison—and to pay a fine of five hundred pounds; and, secondly, for having published the Essay on Woman he was condemned to a further term of imprisonment of twelve calendar months, and to pay another like sum of five hundred pounds. No sooner had this severe sentence been passed, than Wilkes lost no time in submitting his case to the wisdom and justice of the House of Commons. It was a tribunal, however, in which, under existing circumstances, neither wisdom nor justice were very likely to be exercised in his favour. Not only were his former misdoings fresh in the memories of every member of

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 207; Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 100. Edition, 1857.

† MS. original.

the House, but he had also, since his last committal to prison, been guilty of a further offence, which had rendered him more than ever obnoxious to the Government. Lord Weymouth, it should be mentioned, had, at the time when the late riots were approaching their height, addressed a letter to the Chairman of the Surrey magistrates, in which he had exhorted them, in the event of any alarming breach of the peace, to make no scruple of availing themselves of the aid of the military. This letter, as far as we feel competent to form an opinion of it, was neither more urgent nor more suggestive, than such as a Secretary of State, in a crisis of danger, might be expected to address to the civil authorities. Wilkes, however, either judged, or pretended to judge it in a very different light. Having, by some means or other, contrived to obtain a copy of it, he published it with some daring remarks, in which he not only denounced the unhappy conflict in St. George's Fields as a "horrid massacre," but insisted that it had been deliberately projected and carried into fatal execution by Lord Weymouth.

Offensive as this charge undoubtedly was, surely any Government, possessing the slightest claim to a character for prudence and foresight, would, instead of provoking a fresh quarrel with Wilkes, have allowed the stupid calumny to sink into the contempt and oblivion, which, before long, was certain to be its fate. Human passions, however, were much too deeply engaged, and the desire of crushing the dangerous tribune of the people much too strong, to admit of the calm exercise of sober reason. Ministers dreaded Wilkes as much as they detested him. The Scotch still smarted under his illiberal scurrilities; while the King abominated him no less as a firebrand of sedition, than on account of his irreligion, his personal profligacy, and as the cowardly libeller of his mother. In the House of Lords, Lord Weymouth complained of the publication of his letter

as a breach of privilege; while the Commons, on their part, pronounced the prefatory matter to be an "insolent, scurrilous, and malicious libel" and ordered the delinquent to be brought to the bar of their House. On his appearing
Feb. 2. 1769. before them, his calm courage, or rather unblushing effrontery, was remarkable. Had he been standing on the hustings at Brentford, surrounded by a sea of worshippers, instead of appearing as a delinquent at the bar of the Commons of England, his language could not have been more bold, nor his demeanour more undaunted. He not only admitted having been the person who sent Lord Weymouth's letter to the printer, but he gloried, he said, in confessing himself the author of the comments on the "bloody scroll." — "Were I permitted," he added, "I could bring such evidence as would induce this honourable House, not only to entertain the same sentiments on it with myself, but also to forward an impeachment on the noble lord who wrote it. I shall never deny what I look on as a meritorious action, and for which I ought to have your thanks." *

On the 3rd of February, Lord Barrington, then Secretary at War, rose in his place in the House of Commons and moved that Mr. Wilkes be dismissed the House; a motion which was carried by a majority of eighty-three votes. Whatever may have been Wilkes's demerits, the sentence thus passed upon him was alike an unjust, an unconstitutional, and an unwise one. It was unjust, because, having been formerly expelled from the House of Commons on account of the same libels which were now adduced as grounds for his second expulsion, it was tantamount to punishing him twice for the same offence. It was unconstitutional, because his offence was cognisable by, and ought to have been submitted to the arbitration, not of Parliament,

* Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iii. p. 298. See also *Sir H. Cavendish's Debates*, vol. i. pp. 106—140.

but of the ordinary Courts of Justice. Lastly, it was unwise, because it was almost certain to provoke an undignified and unprofitable contest between the House of Commons and a powerful popular constituency such as that of Middlesex, as well as to enhance the importance of a venal adventurer, even now sufficiently formidable. For instance, already, on the death of his fellow-member in the representation of that county, Wilkes's personal influence had been sufficient to secure the return to Parliament of his friend and legal advocate, Serjeant Glynn. At a later period the City of London gave proof of its hearty adoption of his cause by the significant fact of their electing him Alderman and Magistrate of the Ward of Farringdon Without, by a majority of thirteen hundred votes out of fifteen hundred. Other and stronger evidences of popular favour and approval at present awaited him. At a large meeting, held at the London Tavern, three thousand pounds were raised for the payment of his debts, a sum which was subsequently increased by further subscriptions to twenty thousand pounds.* But Wilkes's crowning triumph lay in an enthusiastic resolution which was determined upon, at a great meeting of the freeholders of Middlesex, to set the House of Commons at defiance by putting him a second time in nomination for the representation of the county. The election took place on the 16th of February, when not only was Wilkes returned to Parliament at the head of the poll, but only five freeholders supported the cause of his opponent, Serjeant Whitaker. Thus were the Commons placed in a very difficult and not very dignified dilemma. After having so recently denounced him as a profane and scurrilous libeller, to admit the validity of the late election, and consequently to receive him back as a member of their body, with all his imperfections still upon his head,

Feb. 14.

* Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes, vol. iv. pp. 7, 10; Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 297.

appeared, in the eyes of the majority who had expelled him, too humiliating a stultification of their late proceedings to be taken even for a moment into consideration. With the view therefore of extricating themselves from the false
Feb. 17. position in which they stood, they passed a Resolution, memorable for its weakness and irrationality, that, inasmuch as Wilkes lay under the ban of expulsion, he was incapacitated from taking his seat in Parliament, and consequently that his election was to all intents and purposes null and void. As might have been anticipated, the electors of Middlesex, indignant at this arbitrary decision on the part of the so-called representatives of the people, triumphantly
Mar. 16. re-elected the man of their choice; the results being that the House of Commons again declared Wilkes to be ineli-
Mar. 17. gible to sit in Parliment, and that again the Freeholders of Middlesex put him in nomination as the fittest person to be their representative.

It should be mentioned that the individual, who on the late occasion had stood forward as the rival candidate to Wilkes, was one Charles Dingley, a speculating proprietor of saw-mills at Limehouse—the "miserable Dingley" of Junius *—whose chances of success, however, had been so small, and whose treatment by the populace had been so rough, that he had very early and very wisely retired from the contest. Under these circumstances, to bring Dingley forward a second time as a candidate was out of the question, and accordingly, Colonel Henry Louis Luttrell †—who, it was idly but popularly believed, was to receive the hand of one of Lord Bute's daughters in the event of his success—was induced to vacate his seat for Bossiny, in Corn-

* Letter to the Duke of Grafton, 10 April, 1769. See also, respecting Dingley, *Grenville Papers*, vol. iv. p. 66 and *note*; and *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iii. p. 351, and 352, *note*.

† Second son of Simon first Earl of Carhampton, whom, in consequence of the death of his elder brother, he succeeded in the earldom in 1787. He was promoted to the rank of General in the army, January 1, 1798.

wall, as well as to run the risk of meeting with still rougher treatment than had befallen Dingley, by entering the lists against Wilkes on the hustings at Brentford. So great was the peril which Luttrell was supposed to incur, that his life was insured at Lloyd's coffee-house for a month, and large wagers upon it were given and taken.* Happily the election passed off without bloodshed; the result being that Wilkes obtained as many as eleven hundred and forty-three votes and Luttrell only two hundred and ninety-six. At the close of the poll a large number Apr. 13
of freeholders, accompanied by a band of music, with ribbons streaming and with banners flying, proceeded to the King's Bench Prison to congratulate Wilkes on his success. At night also the city was illuminated.

The House of Commons, instigated by the Ministry, now deemed it advisable to make a change in their tactics. Accordingly, after an animated discussion which lasted for two days, they not only persevered in their former decision that Wilkes was incapacitated from sitting in Parliament, but also passed the monstrous resolution that, in consequence of his being so incapacitated, Colonel Luttrell had a right to take his seat in the House of Commons, and Ap. 16.
to be regarded as the duly elected member for Middlesex. "Thus," in the words of Burke, "ended the fifth act of this tragi-comedy!—a tragi-comedy acted by his Majesty's Servants, at the desire of several persons of quality, for the benefit of Mr. Wilkes and at the expense of the Constitution!"

It was in the hope of discrediting the proceedings of Wilkes and of his admirers, that, at this time, several influential merchants of the City of London prepared an Address to the Sovereign, expressive of their attachment to his person and of their confidence in his government. It would have been as well for them had they kept their loyalty to themselves.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 353.

Mar. 22. On the day fixed upon for the presentation of the Address, the lower classes of people—attracted by the inviting spectacle of a long procession of coaches, containing from six to eight hundred Tory merchants and others, on their way from the City to St. James's—occupied the streets in formidable numbers, and with apparently no very peaceful intentions. As the loyalists passed along, they were not only hissed, hooted, and pelted with mud and stones, but, on reaching Temple Bar, discovered, to their great consternation, that the gates had been closed to prevent their further progress. They had now no choice but to turn aside by a circuitous route through Holborn, whither they had proceeded as far as the corner of Gray's Inn Lane when they were encountered by another lawless concourse of people, whose treatment of them was even rougher than that which they had experienced in Fleet Street. Apprehending still worse usage, some of them, among whom was the chairman, sought refuge in the neighbouring houses, while others made the best of their way back, through the less frequented streets, to their homes. When, at length, the bespattered procession reached St. James's, a third only of the persons who had started with the Address was forthcoming; the chairman being one of the missing. They arrived, too, at a moment of great commotion and riot. "Everybody," writes the Duke of Chandos to George Grenville, "was covered with dirt, and several gentlemen were pulled out of their coaches by neck and heels at the palace-gate. The Dukes of Kingston and Northumberland had their chariots broke to pieces, and their own and servants' clothes spoiled, and some had the impudence to sing—*God save great Wilkes, our King.* The troops beat to arms, and the Guards were trebled. Many were greatly insulted; the mob coming up to the muzzles of their firelocks, but it was thought proper for them not to fire." *

* Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 416.

But, of all the outrages perpetrated on this eventful day, the most scandalous and audacious was one offered personally to the Sovereign. Immediately before the rioting had commenced at St. James's, and while the King was closeted with his Ministers, a hearse, drawn by four horses, two black and two white, was drawn up to the principal entrance of the palace, accompanied by every offensive circumstance of intimidation and insult. On one of the panels of the hearse was a picture of the soldiers shooting young Allen in St. George's Fields, while another panel represented the tragical death of one Clarke, who, during one of the recent elections for Middlesex, had been killed by some chairmen in the pay of the Government candidate. On the roof of the hearse stood a man habited so as to represent an executioner, having an axe in his hand, and his features concealed by crape. This person, as well as the driver of the hearse, were generally supposed at the time to have been gentlemen. According to Wraxall, the former daring individual was a young nobleman of considerable notoriety in his day, Harvey Redmond, second Viscount Mountmorres.*

In the mean time, while the terrified Ministers were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the magistrates, who had been sent for in order to read the Riot Act, a violent attempt was made by the mob to force the hearse into the court-yard of the palace. It was at this crisis, that the great personal strength and pugilistic skill of the Lord Steward,

* Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 416. Wraxall's Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 82. Third edition. The peerages describe Lord Mountmorres as a nobleman of "some genius and literary attainments, and well known in the circles and streets of London." Lord Mountmorres died in a fit of insanity by his own hand. He was the author of a "History of the Transactions of the Irish Parliament" and of other works which will be found enumerated in *Watts' Bibliotheca Britannica*, article, *Mountmorres*. See also *Peerage of Ireland*, London 1817, article, *Mountmorres*. Lord Chesterfield, in October 1768, speaks of Lord Mountmorres as having recently distinguished himself in the Irish Parliament, and as being a "very hopeful young man." *Chesterfield's Letters*, vol. iv. p. 477, edited by Earl Stanhope.

Earl Talbot, enabled him to perform gallant service in the cause of order. Making a sudden dash at the mob through the gateway of the palace, he succeeded in seizing one or two of the ringleaders without waiting for the assistance of the peace-officers, who just at the moment arrived in a formidable body.* No time was now lost in reading the Riot Act and proceeding to disperse the crowd, who, after a brief but daring resistance, thought it prudent to beat a retreat.

During this exciting day, notwithstanding the yells of the mob constantly reached the King's ears, and an irruption into his palace seemed at times almost inevitable, the perfect composure of his countenance and demeanour was the admiration of those who were present with him in the royal closet. "A Lord who was with him," writes Lord Holland, "told me that after the great riot at St. James's, or rather in the midst of it when he came out to the levee, one could not find out, either in his countenance or his conversation, that everything was not as quiet as usual." †

Meanwhile, although the King and Lord Bute had been estranged from each other for the last three years, the mob, no less than the great Whig Lords, persisted, as usual, in regarding him as the secret adviser of his Sovereign, and consequently as the author of their wrongs, whether real or imaginary.‡ It was under this impression, that Lord Bute not only again found himself the object of the most virulent vituperations, but one of the most daring acts of the rioters, during the month of March, was a furious attack upon his

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 352; Grenville Papers, vol. iv. pp. 416, 417.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 55; Wraxall's Historical Memoi vol. ii. p. 83. Third edition.

‡ Even so well-informed a person as Lord Chesterfield writes, on the 30th of October 1767, as follows;—"Whatever places or preferments are disposed of come evidently from Lord Bute, who affects to be invisible, and who, like a woodcock, thinks that, if his head is but hid, he is not seen at all." *Chesterfield's Letters*, vol. iv. p. 459, edited by Earl Stanhope.

house in South Audley Street. Yet at the very time when he was thus suspected and dreaded, the fallen Minister, mortified by neglect and abuse, was about to exile himself from his native country, sick in body and almost broken-hearted from a load of family afflictions.* "I will apprise you," he writes to his friend John Home, the author of "Douglas," July 1768. "how to direct to me, as I shall leave my name behind me for these vipers to spread their venom on. For, believe me, whatever advantage to my health this odious journey may be of, I know too well the turn of Faction to suppose my absence is to diminish the violence I have for so many years experienced—a violence and abuse that no fear has made me too sensible to; and perhaps the more, that I may think I merit a distinguished treatment of a very opposite nature from a people I have served at the risk of my head. I have tried philosophy in vain, my dear Home; I cannot acquire callosity; and were it not for something still nearer to me—still more deeply interesting—I would prefer common necessaries in Bute, France, Italy, nay, Holland, to fifty thousand pounds a-year within the atmosphere of this vile place." † Again, Lord Bute writes to Home from Venice, on the 5th of October, 1770;—"Near three months of this envenomed Sirocco has lain heavy on me, and I am grown such a stripling, or rather a withered old man, that I now appear thin in white clothes that I looked Herculean in when I was twenty. I hope I may get better, if permitted to enjoy that peace, that liberty, which is the birthright of the meanest Briton, but which has been long denied me." ‡ According to Walpole, Lord Bute at this time was "wandering about Italy incognito" under his family name and former family title, Sir John Stuart. In France, curiously enough, his loss of his Sove-

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 188, 232, 233.
† Life of Home by Henry Mackenzie: *Home's Works*, vol. i. pp. 148–9.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 150.

reign's favour was no less persistently discredited than it was in England. During his stay at Barèges, whither he had gone to drink the mineral waters, the French Court ordered him the same guard at his lodgings as if he had been a Prince of the Blood.*

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 379, vol. iv. p. 326.

CHAPTER XXI.

Death of the King's sister, Princess Louisa-Anne—Birth of Princess Augusta—Christian VII. of Denmark, brother-in-law of the King, visits England—Received with coolness at Court, and warmly by the People—Lord Chatham recovers his mental faculties—Resigns office—Is succeeded as Premier by the Duke of Grafton—Lord Chatham takes part in the Debate on the Address—Resignation of Lord Chancellor Camden—Succeeded by the Honourable Charles Yorke—Distressing death of the new Lord Chancellor.

On the 13th of May 1768, death terminated the brief and blameless career of the King's third sister, the Princess Louisa-Anne. Afflicted with bodily disease from her infancy, she was also so diminutive in stature that, though she had completed her nineteenth year, she presented the appearance of a sickly child of thirteen or fourteen.* Fortunately an ardent love of literature had rendered her existence an endurable, if not a happy one; while her singular sweetness of disposition endeared her to all who were either witnesses of her sufferings, or whom she honoured with her regard. For some months previously to her decease she had been afflicted with a troublesome cough, which was followed by a rapid consumption that hurried her to the grave.

This event was succeeded, on the eighth of November following, by the birth of the King's second daughter, the Princess Augusta. The Queen's lying-in took place at Buckingham House, where, with the exception of George the Fourth, she gave birth to all her numerous offspring.

In the mean time, the monotony of the Court had been

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 42.

interrupted by the arrival in England of the most frivolous
Aug. 10. of modern European sovereigns, Christian the Seventh, King of Denmark, who, two years previously, had married Caroline Matilda, the youngest sister of George the Third; the former then in his nineteenth, and the latter in her sixteenth year. The melancholy story of this ill-fated Princess belongs to a later period of our annals. At present it is sufficient to mention that their nuptials had conduced to the happiness of neither. Even at this early period of their union, we find the Danish monarch embittering the existence of his consort by his ill-treatment of her, while the Queen, on her part, is said to have spoken and written of her husband in terms of unequivocal contempt.

The visit of Christian to England, owing to his coarse profligacy, his brutal conduct to his wife, and partly on account of the bustle and parade which his sojourn was sure to occasion at St. James's, was very far from affording pleasure to George the Third.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"RICHMOND LODGE, *June 8th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{x}$ p^{t} 6, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"As to-morrow is the day you receive foreign ministers, you will acquaint M. de Dieden that I desire he will assure the King, his master, that I am desirous of making his stay in this country as agreeable as possible. That I therefore wish to be thoroughly apprized of the mode in which he chooses to be treated, that I may exactly conform to it. This will throw whatever may displease the King of Denmark, during his stay here, on his shoulders, and consequently free me from that *désagrément;* but you know very well that the whole of it *is very disagreeable to me.*" *

In pursuance of the intentions expressed in this note,

* MS. original.

apartments in St. James's Palace were set apart for the use of the Danish King; gold plate, which was rarely used except at Coronations, was brought from the Tower to decorate his side-board; and lastly so hospitable a table was kept for him as to have cost his brother monarch £84 a day, exclusive of the expense of wine.* Yet, if Walpole is to be believed, so marked was the neglect, if not contempt, manifested by the one King for the other, that when the "royal Dane" arrived at St. James's it was in a hired carriage. No military escort, according to Walpole, was appointed to meet him on the road; not even a Lord of the Bedchamber was despatched to do him honour. Walpole, however, had been misinformed. Not only were the royal carriages, though the Danish monarch declined making use of them, waiting for him on his landing at Dover, but, by the command of the Court, the Earl of Hertford and Lord Falmouth were there to bid him welcome.† No doubt the personal intercourse between the two monarchs was sufficiently cold and unsatisfactory. George the Third, for instance, is said to have been holding a levee at St. James's Palace at the time of Christian's arrival there, yet instead of hastening to welcome his kinsman, he contented himself with sending him a chilling message that he would receive him at the Queen's House at half-past five o'clock.‡

But if Christian had reasonable grounds for complaining of the neglect of the English Court, he had, on the other hand, every motive for being satisfied with the absurdly enthusiastic reception which he met with from all classes of society. "The King of Denmark," writes Whately to George Grenville, "is the only topic of conversation. Wilkes himself is forgotten, even by the populace." § The

* Annual Register for 1768, pp. 157, 171. † *Ibid.*, p. 152.
‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 235, 236.
§ Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 372.

University of Oxford, in full Convocation, conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law. A deputation from the University of Cambridge conferred upon him the same distinction.* The Benchers of the Temple invited him to luncheon. The Lord Mayor and Corporation of London not only honoured him with a splendid banquet, and flattered him in nauseously adulatory language, but, at night, the citizens illuminated their houses along the line of streets by which he returned from Guildhall to St. James's.† And yet, all this time, the young debauchee was spending his days in hurrying from sight to sight which he scarcely looked at, and his nights in drinking and frolicking, disguised as a common sailor, in the stews and pot-houses of St. Giles's.

"You cannot speak of reason to the Dane."

That these facts were known to the people of rank and fashion of the day, can scarcely be doubted; yet, despite the vices and follies of the Danish King, we find the aristocracy vying one with the other which could most do him honour by the splendour of the entertainments to which they invited him. As for the women, if Endymion had descended upon earth, they could scarcely have made a greater fuss about him. To be seen without a "Danish Fly," as a new style of head-dress was called after him, would have amounted, to say the least of it, to being out of fashion.

In the mean time, the object of all this admiration seems to have been in no hurry to depart from a country in which his merits were so highly appreciated. "The little King," writes Lord March to George Selwyn, in a letter apparently from Newmarket, "is, I believe, perfectly satisfied with his expedition. When he arrived, which was about ten o'clock, every window in the town was lighted, and as the street

* Annual Register for 1768, pp. 167, &c., 170.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 168—170.

is very broad, you cannot conceive how well it looked. He was yesterday fox-hunting. The Duke of Grafton carried him in his coach. We had a great deal of leaping, and he would go over everything. I was very glad when we got him safe home, and he was mightily pleased with the chase, and satisfied with himself, which put him in better spirits than I ever saw him. He has been magnificently and well served. I believe we have been both days about six-and-twenty at table. As we dine, you know, very late, he retired to his own apartment after coffee, and we all to the coffee-house. He is to see a cock-match this morning, and sets out for London about one." *—"I came to town," writes Walpole, "to see the Danish King. He is as diminutive as if he were out of a kernel in the Fairy Tales. He is not ill-made, nor weakly made, though so small; and, though his face is pale and delicate, it is not at all ugly, yet has a strong cast of the late King, and enough of the late Prince of Wales to put one upon one's guard not to be prejudiced in his favour. Still he has more royalty than folly in his air, and, considering that he is not twenty, is as well as one expects any King in a puppet-show to be. He arrived on Thursday, supped, and lay at St. James's. Yesterday evening he was at the Queen's and Carlton House, and at night at Lady Hertford's assembly. He only takes the title of *altesse*, an absurd *mezzotermine*, but acts king exceedingly; struts in the circle, like a cock-sparrow, or like the late King, and does the honours of himself very civilly." † Again, we find Walpole writing to the Earl of Strafford;—"This great King is a very little one; not ugly nor ill made. He has the sublime strut of his grandfather, ‡ or of a cock-sparrow; and the

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. ii. p. 328.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 118. Ed. 1857.

‡ George II., whose youngest daughter, Louisa, was mother to the Danish King. The King of Denmark was consequently first cousin, as well as brother-in-law, to George III.

divine white eyes of all his family by the mother's side." The two principal attendants of the Danish King were a Count Holke—a handsome and flippant young man whom Walpole alludes to as a "complete jackanapes"—and his prime minister, the Count de Bernsdorffe, whom the same writer describes as a grave old man, perpetually bowing and cringing to his despotic sovereign. "His court," writes Walpole, "is extremely well ordered, for they bow as low to him at every word as if his name was Sultan Amurat. You would take his first minister for only the first of his slaves. I hope this example, which they have been so good to exhibit at the Opera, will contribute to civilize us."* The King of Denmark, writes Gray the poet, "is a genteel lively figure, not made by nature for a fool, but surrounded by a pack of knaves whose interest it is to make him one if they can." † Christian, before his departure from England, made a rapid tour through some of the provinces. According to Walpole, "he took notice of nothing, took pleasure in nothing, but hurried post through most parts of England, dining and supping at seats on the road, without giving himself time enough to remark so much of their beauties as would flatter the great lords who treated him." The young King, however, was short-sighted, and, according to Bernsdorffe,‡ it was to this infirmity that his apparent indifference was to be mainly attributed.

On the 17th of November 1768, died, in his seventy-sixth year, the timid, fawning, and intriguing Thomas Holles Duke of Newcastle. "My old kinsman and contemporary," writes Lord Chesterfield, "is at last dead, and for the first time quiet. He had the start of me at his

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. pp. 120, 122, 123.

† Gray and Mason Corresp., p. 424, 2nd Edition.

‡ The Count de Bernsdorffe, who was an Hanoverian by birth, died in 1772, at the age of sixty. He must not be confounded with his nephew, Count Andrew de Bernsdorffe, who was also prime minister of Denmark, and who died in 1797.

birth by one year and two months, and I think we shall observe the same distance at our burial. I own I feel for his death; not because it will be my turn next, but because I knew him to be very good-natured, and his hands to be extremely clean, and even too clean if that were possible. For, after all the great offices which he had held for fifty years, he died three hundred thousand pounds poorer than he was when he first came into them; a very unministerial proceeding." * From Walpole we learn that the Duke had had a stroke of palsy a few months before his decease, and that then, and not till then, he had taken farewell of politics.†

Meanwhile, we have seen how complete had been the failure of Lord Chatham's "mosaic Administration," as well as how distressing was the state, both of mind and body, to which that illustrious man had been reduced. He had long since ceased to be consulted by his party, to be dreaded by his enemies, and almost to be remembered by his friends. Scarcely even the halo of his former glory illumined his sick chamber. We have seen his rebellious colleagues, during the prostration of their chief, carrying out measures which they must have known to be diametrically opposed to his principles. We have seen them reviving the miserable policy of drawing a revenue from America, and entering into a perilous competition with a worthless demagogue; and lastly, we have to record their supine if not pusillanimous conduct in allowing France to seize upon Corsica, and thus abandoning the bravest of the brave in the hour of their great necessity.

Lord Chatham's mysterious malady may be said to have lasted from the month of May 1767 to the month of October 1768, during which period he had nominally discharged the duties of Lord Privy Seal and had drawn the

* Lord Chesterfield Letters, vol. iv. pp. 478—9. Edited by Earl Stanhope.
† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 265.

liberal salary attached to that high office. On his recovery, the task, which on a former occasion had been undertaken by the Duke of Grafton, of communicating to him the principal political events which had occurred during his malady, devolved upon Lady Chatham. Much she had to relate to him, especially as regarded the conduct of his colleagues, which could not fail to distress and irritate him. But that which gave him the deepest offence was the dismissal of his personal friend Sir Jeffrey Amherst from the post of Governor of Virginia, and the contemplated removal of another of his friends, Lord Shelburne.* Even if he had not already made up his mind to retire from the Administration, so total a disregard of his well-known feelings and wishes would probably have induced him to take that step. Accordingly, on the 12th of October, 1768, he addressed a letter to the Duke of Grafton in which, after having expressed his "deepest sense of his Majesty's long, most humane, and most gracious indulgence" towards him, and offered up "ardent prayers" for the happiness of his Sovereign, he pleaded ill health as a bar to his remaining in office, at the same time formally tendering his resignation of the Privy Seal. That it was with the greatest reluctance the King was induced to dispense with his services, is shown by an autograph letter which he addressed to him on the 14th, in which, in most flattering and almost affectionate language, he earnestly entreated him to continue at his post. "I think," proceeds the King, "I have a right to *insist* on your remaining in my service: for I with pleasure look forward to the time of your recovery, when I may have your assistance in resisting the torrent of Factions this country so much labours under." The Earl, however, was not to be diverted from his resolution. "My health," he wrote back to his Sovereign, "is so

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 246; Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 338.

broken that I feel all chance of recovery will be entirely precluded by my continuing to hold longer the Privy Seal, totally disabled as I still am from assisting in your Majesty's service. Under this load of unhappiness I will not despair of your Majesty's pardon, while I supplicate again on my knees your Majesty's mercy, and most humbly implore your Majesty's royal permission to resign that high office." * After so decided a denial, it was not for the King to condescend to further entreaties, and consequently the necessary Ministerial changes were proceeded with. To please the seceding Earl, his friend, Lord Camden, was pressed to continue Lord Chancellor, and, as a particular compliment to him, the Earl of Bristol was appointed to succeed him as Privy Seal.† Nov. 2. The Earl of Rochfort was nominated Secretary of State in the room of Lord Shelburne, and the Duke of Grafton was confirmed in the Premiership.

Augustus Henry, third Duke of Grafton, was born in the month of October 1735. Gifted with abilities which, had they been united with industry, might have entitled him to aspire to no mean employment in the State, the Duke of Grafton at the age of twenty-two had found himself the envied possessor of the honours and estates of the House of Fitzroy, and, at the age of thirty-two, virtually Prime Minister of England. If any reliance is to be placed in the virulent denunciations of Junius, a more incompetent politician, and, at the same time, a more graceless libertine, has rarely been allowed access to the closet of his Sovereign. "It is not," writes Junius to the Duke, "that your indolence and your activity have been equally misapplied, but that the first uniform principle, or, if I may call it the genius of your life, should have carried you through

* The letters referred to in the text will be found in the *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iii. pp. 338, 343—4. See also *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. iii. p. 246.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 247—8.

every possible change and contradiction of conduct with out the momentary imputation or colour of a virtue; a that the wildest spirit of inconsistency should never once ha betrayed you into a wise or honourable action." * Agai alluding to the Duke's spurious descent from Charles t Second and the abandoned Barbara Villiers, Junius address him—"You have better proofs of your descent, my lo than the register of a marriage, or any troublesome inh ritance of reputation. There are some hereditary strok of character by which a family may be as clearly disti guished, as by the blackest features of the human fac Charles the First lived and died a hypocrite. Charles t Second was a hypocrite of another sort, and should ha died upon the same scaffold. At the distance of a cen tury, we see their different characters happily revived a blended in your Grace. Sullen and severe without religion; profligate without gaiety; you live, like Charles the Second, without being an amiable companion, and, for aught I know, may die as his father did, without the reputation of a martyr." † Lastly, at a later period, Junius addresses the Duke;—"In what language shall I address so black, so cowardly a tyrant? Thou worse than one of the Brunswicks, and all the Stuarts!" ‡

Of a reserved nature and an imperious disposition, vacillating and inconsistent in devising measures, yet equally obstinate in carrying them into execution, the elevation of the Duke of Grafton to the Premiership was not less unfortunate for his country than it was unwarranted by any personal qualifications of his own. True it is, that, some six years afterwards, Charles Fox paid him the compliment of declaring that there was no statesman of the day under whom he would more cheerfully serve; § and

* Letter to the Duke of Grafton, 30 May 1769. † *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, 28 September 1771.

§ In a letter to Sir George Macartney, dated March 14, 1766, Charles Fox, then

not less true that when, at a much later period, the younger Pitt was invited by the King to construct an Administration, one of the first persons to whom he offered high office was the Duke of Grafton. It must be remembered, however, that these tributes were paid to his Grace at a later period of his career, when time may be presumed to have improved his judgment and to have sobered his passions. Neither is it probable that either Fox or Pitt overlooked the important advantages which the Duke's high rank, princely fortune, and powerful borough influence, were certain to confer upon any Administration of which he might become a member. At present, however, we have to deal merely with the two years of misgovernment during which his Grace guided the councils of his sovereign. Preferring indolence to exertion, and the pursuit of pleasure to the interests of his country, the hours, which should have been devoted to discharging his duties to his Sovereign and to the public, are said to have been wiled away on the race-course at Newmarket, in dalliance with a common courtesan, and in galloping after his favourite pack of hounds at Wakefield Lodge. No wonder that so painstaking and conscientious a public servant as George Grenville, should have been shocked at so glaring an abandonment of duty for pleasure. To Whately he writes on the 20th of October 1767 — "The account of the Cabinet Council being put off—first for a match at Newmarket, and secondly, because the Duke of Grafton had company in his house exhibits a lively picture of the present Administration." * When it is borne in mind that the Cabinet Council, herein referred to, had been specially convened to discuss the unsettled state of Ireland, the indignation of Grenville

a boy of seventeen, mentions his having been present at a debate in the House of Lords on the repeal of the Stamp Act, and his having thought the Duke of Grafton's speech the best he had ever heard in that House. *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 26.

* Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 176

at the Duke's conduct may be readily imagined. "The Duke of Grafton," writes Walpole, "diverted himself in the country, coming to town but once a week or once a fortnight to sign papers at the Treasury, and as seldom to the King." *

Not less reprehensible than the public conduct of the Duke was his personal immorality. The fact of the Prime Minister of England, not only acknowledging the notorious Nancy Parsons as his mistress, but constantly parading her in public in that capacity, gave the deepest offence to society even in the not very strait-laced age in which he lived. "Did not the Duke of Grafton," writes Junius, "frequently lead his mistress into public, and even place her at the head of his table, as if he had pulled down an ancient temple of Venus, and could bury all decency and shame under the ruins? Is this the man who dares to talk of Mr. Wilkes's morals?" † Again Junius writes—"If vice itself could be excused, there is yet a certain display of it, a certain outrage to decency, and violation of public decorum, which, for the benefit of society, should never be forgiven. It is not that he kept a mistress at home, but that he constantly attended her abroad. It is not the private indulgence, but the public insult, of which I complain. The name of Miss Parsons would hardly have been known if the first Lord of the Treasury had not led her in triumph through the Opera House, even in the presence of the Queen. When we see a man act in this manner we may admit the shameless depravity of his heart, but what are we to think of his understanding?" ‡ That these charges are not exaggerated is shown, among other evidence, by a letter from Whately to George Grenville. "It is impossible," he writes, "to conceive the disgust which the Duke of Grafton's appearance

* Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 391.
† Letter to the Printer of the Morning Advertiser, 12 June 1769.
‡ *Ibid.*, 22 June 1769.

at the Opera with Mrs. Hoghton, * last Saturday, has given: a Minister, a married man, the Duchess there in the pit—talking to her only, waiting upon her out—are the changes rung by everybody. Libertine men are as much offended as prudish women; and it is impossible he should think of remaining Minister, who thus defies all decency, is almost the general conclusion." † Having been compelled to say so much that is unfavourable to the character of the Duke of Grafton, it is but fair to add, that from the time of his quitting office till his death—a period extending over more than forty years—his conduct was such as to entitle him to the esteem of his friends, and to the respect of society.

Happily, Lord Chatham had scarcely retired from the Ministry, when a further and manifest improvement took place in his health. A fit of the gout, the suppression of which had been the primary cause of his late sufferings, at length dispelled the vapours which had so long and so cruelly obscured his splendid intellects. Nevertheless, it was not till many months afterwards—not till his fellow-countrymen had almost ceased to concern themselves about his existence—that he reappeared upon the public stage. Suddenly, in the month of July 1769, the newspapers surprised the world with the announcement that the great Earl had been present at the King's levee. On his entering the antechamber to the royal closet, the Ministers and courtiers who were present are said to have manifested as much bewilderment as if an apparition had appeared among them. "He—he

* Anne or Nancy Parsons is said to have been the daughter of a tailor in Bond Street. She obtained the name of Hoghton, or Horton, from a West India merchant and captain, who took her under his protection, and whom she accompanied to Jamaica. On her return to London, she hired apartments in Brewer Street, and after having lived with the Duke of Dorset and others, became the mistress of the Duke of Grafton. "Miss Parsons had at this time," says Junius, "surpassed the prime both of her youth and beauty." Notwithstanding, however, the decay of her charms, she subsequently became a Peeress of the realm, by her marriage with Charles, second Viscount Maynard. The peerages style her the widow of —— Horton, Esq.

† Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 275. See also *Ibid.*, p. 348 and *note*.

himself"—writes Walpole—"*in propriâ personâ*, and not
July 7. in a strait waistcoat, walked into the King's levee this morning." * Moreover, he was not only apparently in excellent health but had grown stout.† The King not having yet made his appearance, the Duke of Grafton glided into the royal closet to apprise him of the Earl's resuscitation, leaving the other Ministers to weigh in their minds the contrary chances of their being received with smiles or with frowns by their late imperious colleague. No long time, however, was left them for suspense. To each of them, and more especially to the Duke of Grafton, his manner was unmistakably cold and distant. "Even in the King's outer-room," writes the Duke, "where we met before the levee, when I went up to him with civility and ease, he received me with cold politeness, and from St. James's called and left his name at my door."—"His lordship," adds the Duke, "desired no further interview; and I had such a sense of the unkindness and injustice of such a treatment, when I thought I had a claim for the most friendly, that I was not disposed to seek any explanation." ‡ The Duke of Grafton, according to Walpole, had never been designed by Lord Chatham to be anything more than a "mere tool in office." §

By the King, Lord Chatham, as the Earl himself informs us, was "most graciously" received. His Majesty not only warmly congratulated him on his recovery, but whispered to him to follow him into his closet on the breaking up of the levee. There, according to the Earl, "his Majesty again condescended to express in words of infinite goodness the satisfaction it gave him to see me recovered, as well as

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 175. Edition, 1857.

† Walpole's Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 373.

‡ MS. Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton: *Earl Stanhope's History of England*, vol. v. pp. 32—4. Appendix.

§ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 247. See also the *Grenville Papers*, vol. iv. p. 509.

the regret his Majesty felt at my retiring from his service." * The interview was so far an interesting one, that it was the last occasion on which the King and his haughty subject ever conversed together in the same room. Whether their impending alienation was the fault of the Sovereign or of the subject, the reader will hereafter be able to judge for himself.

Recently an event had occurred which, though it attracted but little attention at the time, was destined materially to affect the politics of the period.† Through the mediation of Lady Chatham a reconciliation, as has been already mentioned, had been effected in the preceding month of November between her husband on the one hand, and her two brothers, Lord Temple and George Grenville, on the other. In that month, Lord Temple had paid a visit to his brother-in-law at Hayes, which the latter had engaged to repay by a visit to Stowe as soon as his health should enable him to undertake the journey. Accordingly, though not till the 14th of July following, we find the convalescent statesman writing to his brother-in-law;—"Your goodness has encouraged us to come in the true patriarchal way, and to bring you no less than three children, Hester, Harriot, and Pitt, who are almost in a fever of expectation till the happy day comes. Old and young count the hours with equal impatience till the pleasure of a letter from your lordship fixes our motions."‡ Lord Chatham's notions of travelling in the "true patriarchal way" are amusingly exemplified in a letter from Edmund Burke to Lord Rockingham, dated the 30th of the same month. "Lord

* Letter to Lord Temple, dated July 7, 1769: *Grenville Papers*, vol. iv. p. 426.

† The event is thus announced in the Political Register, 25 November 1768;—"In consequence of repeated solicitations on the part of the Earl of Chatham, a most cordial, firm, and perpetual union this day took place with his noble brother-in-law, Earl Temple: Mr. Grenville has heartily acceded." See also the *Grenville Papers*, vol. iv. pp. 398 and 403, and *Selwyn Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 355.

‡ Grenville Papers, vol. iv. p. 429.

Chatham," he writes, "passed by my door on Friday morning in a jimwhiskee drawn by two horses, one before the other. He drove himself. His train was two coaches and six, with twenty servants male and female. He was proceeding with his whole family—Lady Chatham, two sons, and two daughters—to Stowe. He lay at Beaconsfield; was well and cheerful, and walked up and down stairs at the inn without help."*

The double event of Lord Chatham's reappearance in public, and of his reconciliation with his brothers-in-law, naturally occasioned much speculation and uneasiness both to the King and to his Ministers. Glad as the King, under other circumstances, would have been to welcome back Lord Chatham to his councils, it was scarcely possible for him not to regard the new family coalition as threatening to deliver him up a second time to the tyranny and insolence of the House of Grenville. Parliament was appointed to assemble on the 9th of January 1770. A strong opposition to the Government, on the question of the Address, was known to be impending in the House of Commons. Few doubted but that the great Earl would head the attack in the House of Lords. He had awoken, to use the Duke of Portland's words, not only "high in spirits" but "high in fury."† The King and his Ministers awaited the result with the greatest anxiety. "I am so desirous," writes the King to Lord North on the 7th, "that every man in my service should take part in the Debate on Tuesday, that I desire you will very strongly press Sir G. Elliot and any others that have not taken a part last Session. I have no objection to your adding that I have particularly directed you to speak to them."‡ In the

* Burke's Corresp., vol. i. pp. 182—3.

† Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 143.

‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 68. Edition, 1858. The King's somewhat unconstitutional appeal to Sir Gilbert Elliot appears to have been successful. On the 1st of February the King again writes to Lord North;

House of Lords on the 9th, almost as much excitement prevailed as among Ministers, when at length the appearance of Lord Chatham, swathed in flannel and supported by crutches, dispelled the doubts of the few who had predicted that the state of his health would prevent his attendance. On his rising from his seat, when it came to his turn to speak, the deepest silence prevailed. Advanced as he was in years, he said, and bowed down by the weight of infirmities, he might have been excused had he clung to retirement, and never again taken a part in public affairs. The alarming state of the nation, however, had induced, nay forced him to come forward and discharge a duty which he owed to his God, his sovereign, and his country. That duty he was resolved to perform, though at the hazard of his life. The state of our foreign relations he described as most critical. During the seven years, he said, that peace had lasted, Great Britain had not only been continually on the verge of war, but at that very moment was without the support of a single ally. He then reverted to the state of America. An unhappy policy, he said, had alienated the affections of the Colonies from the mother-country, and had driven them to commit excesses which he admitted he was unable to justify. Nevertheless, such was his partiality for America, that, though he could not justify, he was willing to make allowances for those excesses. The discontent of two millions of people deserved consideration, and the causes of that discontent ought to be removed.*

The great orator then animadverted on the state of affairs at home. Never, he asserted, had there existed a greater necessity for contentment and unanimity, yet never

—"A little spirit will soon restore order in my service. I am glad to find that Sir G. Elliot has again spoken." *Ibid.*, p. 69. Sir Gilbert, who was the father of the first Earl of Minto, died in February 1777. He was the author of the once celebrated song;—

"My sheep I neglected, I broke my sheep-hook."

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. pp. 647—650.

had there been prevalent a more general dissatisfaction Into the causes of that general dissatisfaction it was not only their Lordships' duty to inquire, but to advise their Sovereign how to remedy the evil. The liberty of the subject, he said, had been invaded, not only in the Colonies but at home. The people were loud in their complaints, nor till they had obtained redress would they return to a state of tranquillity. Neither, he insisted, were the people to blame for their late resistance to the laws. Far better would it be for them to perish in a glorious contention for their rights, than to purchase a slavish tranquillity at the expense of a single particle of the Constitution. The great and notorious discontent which existed at home was plainly attributable, he said, to the arbitrary expulsion of Mr. Wilkes from the House of Commons. By a resolution of one branch only of the Legislature, a subject of his Majesty had been most unconstitutionally deprived of his common right, and the Electors of Middlesex of their free choice of a representative.*

Lord Chatham was answered by Lord Mansfield, whose reply, however, though a very powerful one, instead of strengthening the cause of Government, drew down still fiercer denunciations from the lips of the impassioned Earl. The Constitution of the country, he said, had been invaded. With horror and astonishment he had heard that invasion defended upon principle. Freely as he admitted the just power, and reverenced the constitution, of the House of Commons, yet, for their own sakes, as well as for the sake of liberty, he would prevent them from assuming a jurisdiction to which they had no title, and usurping an authority to which they had no right. They had betrayed their constituents and violated the Constitution of the land. Under pretence of carrying out the law, they had made the law.

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. pp. 651—653.

Contrary to all principles of justice, they had united in their own persons the offices of legislator and judge.*

It was in the course of this reply, that Lord Chatham delivered one of the most brilliant of his famous oratorical displays. Exhorting his brother peers to imitate the glorious example of their ancestors—the redoubtable Barons who had been the founders of the Constitution—he exclaimed;—"Those iron Barons—for so I may call them when compared with the silken barons of modern days—were the guardians of the people; yet their virtues were never engaged in a question of such importance as the present. A breach has been made in the Constitution—the battlements are dismantled—the citadel is open to the first invader—the walls totter—the Constitution is not tenable. What remains then for us but to stand foremost in the breach; to repair or to perish in it?"†

The most remarkable event connected with this celebrated debate was the almost magical effect which Lord Chatham's eloquence produced on the mind and conduct of his old schoolfellow and friend, Lord Chancellor Camden. It should be mentioned that notwithstanding the Lord Chancellor had for some time past differed widely in opinion from his colleagues in the Ministry, this eminent lawyer and patriot had continued to cling to office with a tenacity for which it would be difficult to find excuse. But, as an old war-horse may be presumed to prick up his ears at the sound of the bugle, so did Lord Camden respond to the animated appeal of his former comrade in many a fierce political encounter. To the dismay of Ministers he at once arose and arraigned them as traitors to the Constitution; as enemies to, if not conspirers against, the liberties of their country. "I accepted the Great Seal at first," he said, "without conditions. I meant not therefore to be trammelled by his Majesty—I beg pardon, by his

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. pp. 658–9. † *Ibid.*, vol. xvi. p. 662.

Ministers. But I have suffered myself to be so too long. For some time I have beheld with silent indignation the arbitrary measures which they were pursuing. I have often drooped and held down my head in council, and disapproved by my looks those steps which I knew my avowed opposition could not prevent. I will, however, do so no longer, but will openly and boldly speak my sentiments." Ministers, added the Chancellor, had by their violent and tyrannical conduct alienated the minds of the people from his Majesty's Government; he had almost said from his Majesty's person. A spirit of discontent had extended itself into every corner of the kingdom, and unless means were devised for allaying the universal clamour and dissatisfaction, he knew not but the people in their despair would become their own avengers, and assume to themselves the redress of their manifold grievances.*

After so furious and unprecedented an attack on his colleagues, the continuance of Lord Camden in office was necessarily destined to be of brief duration. To supply the place of so distinguished a lawyer and so popular a Minister required leisure and consideration, and accordingly it was moved by Lord Pomfret, on the part of the Government, that the House of Lords should adjourn for a week. The proposal was violently resisted by the Opposition Lords. The House, exclaimed Lord Temple, was well aware for what purpose the adjournment was required. It was to afford time to the King's servants to repair a shattered and tottering Administration. Their object, he said, was to rid themselves of the virtuous and independent Lord who sat on the Woolsack, in order to fill his place with some obsequious lawyer who would render passive obedience to his patrons.† In similar language also Lord Shelburne denounced his former colleagues. It was clear, he said, that the Great Seal would go a-begging. He hoped, how-

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. pp. 643—4, *note*. † *Ibid.*, p. 665.

ever, that in the whole kingdom no wretch would be found so base and mean-spirited, as to accept office under a Ministry who required such servile conditions.*

It was under these circumstances that the Great Seal was offered by the Duke of Grafton to Charles Yorke, son of the late Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. A more unexceptionable appointment, or one better calculated alike to strengthen the Ministry and to advance the interests of the public, it would have been impossible to make. His political opponents, indeed, had sometimes accused him of irresolution and timidity, but if any truth had lain in these charges it was attributable to almost too tender a conscience; to an over anxiety lest he might fail in the performance of his public duties, or lest the interests of his clients might suffer in his hands. In private life his integrity was unimpeachable. He was distinguished by many virtues and beloved by many friends. Both as a man of letters and as a speaker in Parliament, he had rendered himself scarcely less eminent than as a lawyer. In the pursuit of literature and in the society of literary men had lain the natural bent of his genius; but, unhappily for himself, ambition, almost in his boyhood, had pointed to the Great Seal and the Woolsack as the proper objects of his aspirations. His success at the Bar had been rapid and brilliant. Twice, and with great credit, he had filled the office of Attorney-General, and now, at the comparatively early age of forty-eight, the splendid prize which he had so ardently coveted seemed to be within his grasp. Unfortunately, however, Charles Yorke was pledged, on certain points, both to his brother Lord Hardwicke, as well as to Lord Rockingham, as his political chief, and accordingly, notwithstanding the arguments and importunities of his wife, an ambitious and singularly beautiful woman, he

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 665.

acted, as those who knew and loved him best expected he would act, by declining the high honour which was offered to him. Happy, as we shall presently perceive, would it have been for him, had he never been induced to swerve from this honourable determination.

In the mean time, the condition of the King's affairs had become more and more precarious, and his distress more and more poignant. Not only was Charles Yorke's rejection of the Great Seal a severe disappointment to the Government, but the Duke of Grafton's undisguised and growing aversion to the labour and responsibility of office threatened its early dissolution. The King, however, was resolved, even though he should stand alone in the breach, to resist what he regarded as the factious opposition of the Rockingham and Grenville parties. Charles Yorke, he felt, might still be prevailed upon to accept the Great Seal, and the present Ministers be thus maintained in power. Ambitious, irresolute, and at the same time chivalrously loyal, the concession which the accomplished lawyer had refused to the tears of a beautiful woman might yet be accorded to the personal entreaties of his Sovereign.

It was at this crisis, and while the Great Seal was still "going a-begging," that, on Wednesday, the 17th of January, Charles Yorke felt it his duty to present himself at the King's levee. To his surprise, instead of the mere cold, perhaps sullen recognition, which he had anticipated, the King not only received him most graciously but, as he was quitting the presence-chamber, the lord-in-waiting whispered in his ear that his Majesty desired to see him in his closet after the levee. What passed at that memorable interview will doubtless never be accurately known. Certain only it is that the King exerted all his eloquence to convince him of the dangers and degradation which he imagined to beset the throne; that he urgently entreated him to come forward and extricate him from his great

difficulty; and that Mr. Yorke, in an evil hour for himself, was induced to listen to the voice of the charmer.* Before he took leave of the Sovereign he had kissed hands as Lord Chancellor of England, and, the same evening, took the oaths as Lord Chancellor at a special Council held at Buckingham House.

A brief but tragical story remains to be related. On quitting the palace the new Chancellor repaired to the residence of the Duke of Grafton, whom he astonished with the intelligence of his altered determination. Thence—nervous, unhappy, and dreading to encounter the cold looks and perhaps keen reproaches of near relatives and old friends—he proceeded to the residence of his brother Lord Hardwicke in Grosvenor Square. Unfortunately, at the moment when his name was announced, there happened to be gathered there two or three of the leaders of the Opposition, and among them Lord Rockingham. In vain the unhappy renegade attempted to explain and to justify the motives which had induced him to sever himself from his party. He was received, according to some accounts, with bitter reproaches, according to others with silent but unmistakable scorn. The effect produced by this treatment on a temperament constitutionally nervous, and on a mind already deeply agitated by the events of the last two days, seems to have been terrible beyond endurance. On reaching his own home in Bloomsbury Square he hurriedly swallowed some ardent spirits which happened unfortunately to be at hand; was seized with fever the same evening, and on the following day was alarmingly worse. On Friday the 19th, he was visited by his brother, Lord Hardwicke. "He was in bed," writes the

* Thirty-four years afterwards, the King made the painful admission to George Rose, that he had plainly intimated to Mr. Yorke, that if he *then* refused the Seals, they should *not* again be offered to him, whatever changes might ultimately take place in the Government. *Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose*, vol. ii. p. 165.

Earl, "and too much disordered to be talked with." * In the mean time, a mysterious secrecy, of two days' duration, was, whether wisely or unwisely, maintained in the chamber of the dying man. Not only, when the Duke of Grafton called upon him—apparently on the 19th—was his Grace kept in complete ignorance of the true state of the Chancellor's condition, but even on the 20th, more than four hours after he had ceased to exist, we find even the King unenlightened on the subject.†

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Jan.* 20*th*, 1770, $\frac{m}{pt}$ p. 9, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Lest the Chancellor's fever should not be so thoroughly removed that it might be hazardous for him to attend the House of Lords on Monday, I wish to be informed whether the Commission, enabling Lord Chief Justice Wilmot to attend as Speaker in the absence of the late Chancellor, authorises him still to act in that capacity until the Lord Morden ‡ has taken his seat. I wish also to know, when I return from Richmond, what account you have received of the Chancellor's health this day." §

The account which the Duke of Grafton has bequeathed to us of his visit to Bloomsbury Square increases the mystery which hangs over the closing hours of Charles Yorke. "By his own appointment," writes the Duke in his Memoirs, "I went to his house, about nine o'clock in the evening—two days, as I believe, after Mr. Yorke had

* Lord Hardwicke's "Account of the offer of the Great Seal to Mr. Charles Yorke:" *Harris's Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke*, vol. iii. p. 473; Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 164.

† Lord Hardwicke inserts in his Account;—"He died that day [the 20th] *about five in the evening.*" *Harris's Life of Lord Hardwicke*, vol. iii. p. 473. Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 165. The King's note to Lord Weymouth, inserted in the text, bears date, as will be perceived, half-past nine P.M. on that day.

‡ The title by which Mr. Yorke was to have been raised to the peerage in consequence of his acceptance of the Great Seal.

§ MS. original.

been sworn in at a Council-board, summoned for that purpose at the Queen's House. Being shown into his library below, I waited a longer time than I supposed Mr. Yorke would have kept me without some extraordinary cause. After above half-an-hour waiting, Dr. Watson, his physician, came into the room. He appeared somewhat confused, sat himself down for a few minutes, letting me know that Mr. Yorke was much indisposed from an attack of colic. Dr. Watson soon retired, and I was ruminating on the untowardness of the circumstance, never suspecting the fatal event which had occurred, nor the still more lamentable cause ascribed for it by the world, and, as I fear, upon too just grounds. I rang the bell, and acquainted one of the servants that Mr. Yorke was probably too ill to see me, and that I would postpone the business, on which I came, to a more favourable moment." * According to Walpole, Mr. Yorke fell by his own hand, but "whether on his sword or by a razor" was uncertain.† "Mr. Yorke," writes the Duke of Grafton, "I believe was a religious man. It is rare to hear of such a person being guilty of an action so highly criminal. It must therefore, in him, have been a degree of passionate frenzy bearing down every atom of his reason. You will not wonder that I cannot think on the subject without much horror still." ‡

Charles Yorke, as has already been mentioned, expired on the 20th of January. At the time of his dissolution, there lay on a table in the chamber of death, as if in derision of human ambition, the Great Seal of the Lord Chancellor of England, as well as the patent which was to have created him Baron Morden. It was not unnatural that the beautiful woman whom he left a widow should have desired to see her offspring ennobled, and consequently

* MS. Memoirs: *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. iv. p. 419. *Appendix.*
† *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. iv. p. 53.
‡ MS. Memoirs: *Walpole's Reign of George* 3, vol. iv. p. 420. *Appendix.*

it was probably at her suggestion that the dying Chancellor was asked whether he wished the Great Seal to be attached to the patent in his presence, in order to give it the validity which it would otherwise have wanted. The proposition, however, is said to have been listened to by him with a shudder. "When my poor brother," writes Lord Hardwicke, "was asked if the seal should be put to it, he waived it and said he hoped it was no longer in his custody." * Even after the breath had quitted the body, it was most indecently suggested to Lord Hardwicke to borrow the virtues of the Great Seal, and thus confer the title of Morden upon the widow and son of his unhappy brother. The proposition, it is almost needless to add, was unhesitatingly rejected.

The fact of Charles Yorke having committed suicide has been occasionally called in question. "I think it incumbent on me," writes Cradock the autobiographer, "to contradict the reported manner of his death on the authority of one of his own family. He certainly was much agitated after some hasty reproaches that he had received on his return from having accepted the Seals, and he hastily took some strong liquor which was accidentally placed near the sideboard, and by its occasioning great sickness he broke a blood-vessel. The friend, from whom I received the account, assured me that he was present when the corpse was left openly in the chamber that the attendants might gratify their curiosity, and see that his death could not be truly attributed to the direct means which had been so publicly and so confidently reported." † That this may be the true version of the circumstances under which Charles Yorke met his fate, is of course not impossible. But, on the other hand, if we take into consideration the significant

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 165. "My poor brother's entanglement," writes Lord Hardwicke, "was such as history can scarce parallel." *Ibid.* p. 164.

† Cradock's Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs, pp. 92—3. 2nd Edition.

facts that the person from whom Cradock received his intelligence was a member of the deceased's own family, and therefore was interested in keeping back the truth—that two such well-informed contemporaries as the Duke of Grafton and Horace Walpole apparently entertained not a doubt but that suicide was the cause of death—that it was preceded by a copious effusion of blood—and, lastly, when we call to mind that not only did a strange and impolitic mystery, if not secrecy, prevail in the household of the unhappy Chancellor at the time of his approaching dissolution, but that his family made but slight, if any endeavours, to relieve his memory from the odium which attaches itself to self-slaughter—we are assuredly furnished with strong, though certainly not conclusive evidence, that, in a moment of uncontrollable frenzy, the gifted orator and lawyer perished by his own hand.

CHAPTER XXII.

Resignation of the Duke of Grafton—Perplexity of the King—Lord North appointed Premier—His qualities as a Minister—Deputations to the King—Lord Mayor Beckford—His celebrated Speech to the King—Contest between the City of London and the House of Commons—The Lord Mayor and Alderman Oliver committed to the Tower—The proceedings against Alderman Wilkes abandoned by the House—Wilkes's subsequent career.

THE unexpected demise of Charles Yorke increased not a little the vexation and distress of the King and the difficulties of his Ministers. So precarious had become the existence of the Administration, so unpopular had it rendered itself by the dismissal of Lord Camden from the Chancellorship, that not a lawyer could be found who was at the same time sufficiently competent to hold, and bold enough to accept, that highly-prized and honourable office. Of the principal law-advisers of the Crown, Lord Mansfield * wanted nerves; Sir Eardley Wilmot † and Sir William De Grey ‡ wanted health; Sir Fletcher Norton § wanted character; and lastly Dunning || had chosen to array himself as a patriot by the side of Lords Camden and Chatham. Moreover, the removal of Lord Camden had led to several inconvenient retirements from Office. The Marquis of Granby, the most popular soldier of his time, insisted, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of the King and the Duke of Grafton, on throwing up all his appointments with the exception of his regiment of Blues.¶

* Chief Justice of the King's Bench.
† Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.
‡ Attorney-General.
§ Chief Justice in Eyre south of the Trent.
|| Solicitor-General.
¶ Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 391.

The Duke of Beaufort resigned his post as Master of the Horse to the Queen. The Duke of Manchester and the Earl of Coventry vacated their situations as Lords of the Bedchamber; and lastly, the Earl of Huntingdon threw up his appointment as Groom of the Stole, and James Grenville that of Joint Treasurer of Ireland.

Such was the embarrassing situation of the King's affairs, when, on the 22nd of January, Lord Rockingham moved in the House of Lords that a day be appointed to take into consideration the state of the nation. Ever since his Majesty's accession to the throne, he said, the condition of public affairs had continued to grow more and more deplorable, and the discontent of the people more widespread and formidable. A new maxim, he insisted, had been introduced into the Government, which foreboded alike the extension of the royal prerogative and the destruction of the liberties of the subject. That maxim, he said, had been encouraged by his Majesty's present Ministers. Their policy, both domestic and foreign, he denounced as monstrous. Their invasion of the Constitution, he exclaimed, had thrown the whole country into a flame. Surely, concluded the Marquis, it was the province of their Lordships, under such circumstances as these, to indicate to the Crown the means best adapted for correcting the errors of the past, as well as for establishing a form of Government more in harmony with the genius and the interests of the people, and more consistent with the spirit of the Constitution.*

If the language of Lord Rockingham was calculated to give offence to the King, much more so was the philippic delivered by Lord Chatham in the course of the debate. Let the breach in the Constitution, he said, be effectually repaired, and the people of their own accord would return to a state of tranquillity; but if not, he solemnly added, —"may Discord prevail for ever!" A great constitutional

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. pp. 742—745.

question, he said, was at issue which must, sooner or later, be decided. "Rather," he exclaimed, "than I would give it up; rather than the nation should surrender its birthright to a despotic Minister, I hope, old as I am, to see the question brought to issue, and fairly tried between the People and the Government." *

It was while the King was still smarting under the effects of this bold, if not revolutionary language, that, on the 2nd of February, the day on which the Peers had agreed to discuss the state of the nation, the public was astonished by the intelligence that the Duke of Grafton had ceased to be
Jan. 28. Prime Minister of England. This sudden abandonment of his Sovereign in the hour of his great necessity appears to have entailed upon the Duke no less the scorn of his contemporaries, than the lasting indignation of his royal master. It was in vain, as the King, many years afterwards, told George Rose, that Lord Weymouth endeavoured "to infuse some firmness and manliness" into the Duke.† He had dragged his King, it was said by the public, into a slough of difficulty, and now was pusillanimous enough to leave him to flounder out of it as best he might.‡ The Duke, however, had many reasons for deserting his post, although they may not have been altogether satisfactory. Surely, it could have required no Mentor to tell him that, neither by temper, by firmness, by great abilities, nor by commanding eloquence, was he adapted to emerge victoriously from the fierce political contest which his more high-spirited Sovereign was evidently prepared to risk. Surely, by this time, he must have begun to share the con-

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. p. 748.

† Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose, vol. ii. p. 184.

‡ It has been said that, but for the advice and persuasions of his mistress, Nancy Parsons, the Duke would have deserted his colours at a much earlier period. "She had the sense," writes Nicholls, "to see that the Duke's honour required him to remain firm in his connection with the Earl of Chatham. She had the sense to see this, and she had the integrity to tell him so." *Nicholls's Recollections of the Reign of George* 3, vol. 1, p. 27. 2nd Edition.

viction of others, that his further tenure of political power, instead of conducing to the advantage of, was calculated to jeopardize the cause of his royal master. Smarting under the cruel and malignant invectives of Junius; rendering himself amenable, by his insolence and by the barefaced profligacy of his private life, to the bitterest attacks of the press; detested by the great mass of his fellow-countrymen; deserted by the two most popular and influential of his colleagues, Lords Camden and Granby; distrusting and distrusted by every remaining member of the Cabinet, with the single exception of General Conway; denounced in Parliament by the mighty voice of Lord Chatham as a traitor to his country, it is not to be wondered at that he should only too gladly have exchanged the cares and perils of office for the pleasant security of Euston Hall, and the still more congenial delights of Newmarket!

With regard to the King, never since he had ascended the throne had he found himself in a more embarrassing and painful dilemma. Abandoned by the Duke of Grafton; rebelling against what he considered the degrading alternative of having a Ministry forced upon him against his will; shuddering at the prospect of being again subjected to the insulting and wearisome lectures of George Grenville; assailed and held up to public obloquy by the leaders of the two formidable parties in opposition, Lords Rockingham and Chatham; despising the former on account of his want of firmness and administrative ability, and incensed against the latter on account of his recent violent language in Parliament, there was possibly not one of the King's subjects, who, knowing the state of his feelings, would have envied him his diadem. There was a still stronger motive which induced the King to cling to his present incompetent Ministers. Next to being held in bondage by the overbearing Whig grandees, he looked upon the dominion of the mob with the greatest abhorrence.

These two elements, as far as he could gather from the language of Lord Chatham in the House of Peers, threatened ere long to be united, and consequently it was only to be expected that the King should rebel against an alliance which, in his judgment, and in that of the Tory party, was pregnant alike with insult to the Crown, and with peril to the Constitution. A change of Ministry, as he was well aware, must entail a Dissolution of Parliament. A new Parliament would assuredly reverse the unconstitutional proceedings against Wilkes. That mischievous firebrand would again be returned to the House of Commons, and thus, in the King's opinion, would the triumph of faction and disorder be rendered complete. To prevent a Dissolution therefore was the primary object of the King. Sooner than consent to one, he said to General Conway, he would abdicate the throne. "Yes!" he exclaimed—at the same time laying his hand upon his sword—"I will have recourse to this, sooner than yield to a Dissolution." *

That the King was in the wrong, at this period, in rejecting the services of the Opposition we are not prepared to dispute. That he imagined he had good reasons for rejecting them we have already shown. Grateful, indeed, as all Englishmen ought to be to the Whig Opposition leaders of the last century, on account of their wise and persistent advocacy of most of those liberal and enlightened measures which have since become the law of the land, it will nevertheless scarcely be denied that a want of conciliation had almost uniformly marked their conduct towards their Sovereign—that their principle had been to take the royal closet by storm, not to win access to it by persuasion—that their treatment of the King had been frequently provoking and irritating in the extreme—and lastly that their language in Parliament, and at public meetings, was often such as to make him tremble

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 60.

for the safety of his, perhaps too dearly prized, prerogative. If, on the one hand, the war, which George the Third so unflinchingly carried on with the "Great Families" during nearly half a century, was fraught with much evil to the Commonwealth, there were assuredly faults on the other side. Doubtless a monarch of wider experience, and of a more liberal education, would have learned to estimate, at their proper value, alike the occasional bluster of his nobles and the licentious conduct of the lower orders of his people. The King, indeed, had quite sufficient discernment to perceive how unpatriotic, how factious, how selfish, were frequently the motives which influenced the actions of the principal public men of his day; but, on the other hand, he was wanting in that deeper sagacity which might have taught him that to punish insubordination too arbitrarily and too severely was the surest method of creating political martyrs; that the fiercest champion of popular rights too often becomes a Tory when invested with power; and lastly that, however loud might be the clamour of the rabble, and however profligately the Whig Party might have availed themselves of prevailing discontents, yet, after all, the royal authority was likely to be quite as safe in the keeping of Lord Rockingham or Lord Chatham as if entrusted to the Tory guardianship of a Lord Bute or a Lord North. No man could bow lower to royalty than the democratic Chatham. No man could hold the opinions of the lower orders in greater contempt than their idol Wilkes.

It was in the present difficult and dangerous state of public affairs, that the King looked about him for a statesman, not only courageous and self-sacrificing enough to accept the dangerous post vacated by the Duke of Grafton, but possessed of sufficient honesty, wisdom, and experience to render his Administration likely to be a firm and lasting one. The individual whom he honoured with his choice was the celebrated Frederick, Lord North, at this time Chancellor of

the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. "Lord Weymouth and Lord Gower," writes the King to Lord North on the 23rd of January, "will wait upon you this morning to press you in the strongest manner to accept the office of First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury. My mind is more and more strengthened in the rightness of the measure, which will prevent every other desertion. You must easily see that if you don't accept I have no peer, at present, that I would consent to place in the Duke of Grafton's employment." *

Lord North possessed three qualifications which were calculated to render him especially acceptable to his Sovereign. His private life was wholly untainted by the immorality of the age. He was unconnected by blood, or by other inconvenient ties, with the Great Families; and lastly he was a staunch and consistent opponent of Wilkes and of the ultra-democratic party. When, to use Lord North's own words in the House of Commons, there had appeared on the public stage "that strange phenomenon Mr. Wilkes," he had been the first to move his expulsion from the House. "Every subsequent proceeding against that man," he exclaimed, "I have supported, and I will again vote for his expulsion, if he again attempts to take his seat in this House. *In all my memory I do not recollect a singular popular measure I ever voted for.* No, not even for the Nullum Tempus Bill, nor the declaring the Law in the case of General Warrants. I state this to prove that I am not an ambitious man. Men may be popular without being ambitious, but there is rarely an ambitious man who does not try to be popular." † Lord North chivalrously and unhesitatingly responded to the call of his Sovereign. In Walpole's words, he "plunged into the danger at once." On the 5th

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. pp. 68-9. Edition, 1858.
† Speech, 2 March, 1769: *Cavendish's Debates*, vol. i. pp. 299, 300.

of February he was gazetted as First Lord of the Treasury; retaining at the same time, according to former precedents, his post of Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Frederick, eldest son of Francis first Earl of Guilford, was, at the time of his elevation to the Premiership, in his thirty-eighth year. He had been educated at Eton and afterwards at Trinity College Oxford, of which University he subsequently became Chancellor. Besides having early made himself master of the French, Italian, and German languages, he had imbibed, while a boy at Eton, an ardent and enduring love for the works of the great writers of antiquity, which happily, in after years, threw a solace and a grace over the terrible infliction of blindness, and over the monotony of old age. He was the author of the first copy of verses in the "Musæ Etonenses," as well as of several others in that classical miscellany. He had travelled in his youth, and had made himself acquainted with the laws and constitutions of the different countries which he had visited. Shortly after having attained his majority he was returned to Parliament as Member for Banbury. From 1759 to 1765 he held the appointment of a Lord of the Treasury. In 1766 he was nominated Joint Paymaster of the Forces, and in 1767 succeeded the volatile Charles Townshend as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Lord North was of the middle stature, thick-set, and inclined to corpulency. His hair was light, his complexion fair, his eye-brows bushy, his eyes grey and somewhat prominent. "Nothing," writes Walpole, "could be more coarse, or clumsy, or ungracious, than his outside. Two large prominent eyes that rolled about to no purpose—for he was utterly short-sighted—a wide mouth, thick lips, and inflated visage, gave him the air of a blind trumpeter." *

The ungainly person of Lord North, his clumsy move-

* Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 78.

ments, his near-sightedness, and lastly the misfortune of having a tongue too large for his mouth, naturally deprived him of all pretensions to grace whether in the senate or in the palace. His utterance was disagreeable, his delivery inelegant, his manner awkward. Burke, on one occasion in the House of Commons, hit off his infirmities, apparently to his very face. "The noble lord," he said, "after extending his right leg a full yard before his left, rolling his flaming eyes, and moving his ponderous frame, has at length opened his mouth."* Yet, notwithstanding these unlucky drawbacks, Lord North was always an amusing and frequently a very powerful speaker. Moreover, his extraordinary command of language, his extensive reading, the evenness of his temper, his perfect presence of mind, an abundance of shrewd common sense, and a memory so retentive as to enable him to recollect every point that had been argued in the course of a debate, unquestionably qualified him to figure in the first ranks, if not as an orator, at least as a debater. Of his strong sense of the ridiculous, and powers of ridicule, he availed himself with the most consummate skill. If his enemies pressed too closely upon him, his good humoured banter and jest were often more than a match for their bitterest invectives. If his arguments fell pointless, the failure was overlooked by others in the abundance of his pleasantry and good humour. The laugh with which he enjoyed his triumph was irresistible. Over and over again, he might happily have applied to himself a couplet written by him as an Eton boy, but which in all probability he had ceased to remember—

"Non te jam expectant laurus, non præmia palmæ,
Victori post tot prælia risus adest."†

Neither, when it suited his purpose, had he any objection

* Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. p. 720.

† Musæ Etonenses, vol. i. p. 14.

"———Peccare docentes
Historias.
"North. A.D. 1748."

to turn the joke against himself. On one occasion a member of the House of Commons having spoken contemptuously of him as "that thing called a Minister"—"Well," he said, patting his capacious sides, "to be sure I am a thing. The honourable Member, therefore, when he called me 'a thing' said what was true, and I could not be angry with him. But when he added 'that thing called a Minister,' he called me that thing which of all things he himself wished most to be, and therefore I took it as a compliment." *

Lord North's wit had that peculiar and charming quality, that it never gave offence. He singled out no particular individual for his butt; his arrows flew indiscriminately on all sides, and consequently he never made a personal enemy. His hearty good-humoured manner, and the almost boyish gaiety which he displayed whenever he had discomfited an adversary, afforded sufficient evidence how little malice there was in his wit; and accordingly not unfrequently the very persons who had been the most exposed to his ridicule were among the first to join in the laugh against themselves. Under no circumstances could his adversaries ruffle his good-humour, much less excite him to anger. So equable, indeed, was his temper, and so unexcitable his temperament, that frequently, almost before his political opponent had risen to answer his arguments, he had sunk into a sleep as calm as that of an infant. While snatching one of these "*sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ*," it was to no purpose that either Barré declaimed against him as an enemy to his country; that Charles Fox assailed him with his most withering sneers, or that Burke thundered impassioned menaces of impeachment in his ears. While the House enjoyed the eloquence of the Opposition leaders, the Prime Minister luxuriated in his nap. "The cause of Government," writes Gibbon, then a member of

* Butler's Reminiscences, p. 159.

the House of Commons, "was ably vindicated by Lord North, a statesman of spotless integrity, a consummate master of debate, who could wield with equal dexterity the arms of reason and of ridicule. He was seated on the Treasury Bench, between his Attorney and Solicitor General, the two pillars of the law and state, *magis pares quam similes;* and the minister might indulge in a short slumber, whilst he was upholden on either hand by the majestic sense of Thurlow, and the skilful eloquence of Wedderburn." * On one of these occasions, an Opposition member, imagining the Premier to be sound asleep, exclaimed, in words which were intended to thunder reproach into his ears,—"Even now the noble Lord is slumbering over the ruin of his country!"—"I wish to Heaven," muttered Lord North, as he slowly opened his eyes, "that I was!" †

Yet either Thurlow or Wedderburn had only to touch the elbow of their chief, and to give him a hint of what had transpired during his state of unconsciousness, and he was ever ready, if not with an unanswerable argument, at least with some irresistible pleasantry. That same sweetness of temper, which rendered him popular with the world, endeared him still more to his own family. "I never," writes his charming daughter, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, "saw my *father really out of humour*. He had a drunken, stupid groom, who used to provoke him, and who, from this uncommon circumstance, was called by the children the 'man who puts Papa in a passion.'" Yet, adds Lady Charlotte, "I think he continued all his life putting Papa in a passion and being forgiven, for I believe he died in his service." ‡

The number of years during which Lord North had sat

* Gibbon's Misc. Works, p. 93. Edition, 1837.
† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 121.
‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3. First Series, p. 295.

in the House of Commons, and his constant habit of taking a part in its debates, had furnished him with a thorough knowledge of the weaknesses of human nature, which no living statesman was more dexterous in turning to his own advantage. He possessed also a complete acquaintance with the rules and constitution of the House of Commons. As its leader, no one ever enjoyed in a happier degree the art of parrying a direct question with an indirect answer. If it happened to be expedient to stave off a troublesome debate, he could keep the House amused for hours. Sometimes, on these occasions, he was pathetic; sometimes humorous; sometimes he affected to be confidential. In the art of bewildering, and at the same time of entertaining, he was unsurpassed. To his audience his language had all the appearance of being concise and his arguments of being unanswerable; and yet, on cooler consideration, not one person perhaps, of those who had gone away delighted with his eloquence, could recall that the Prime Minister had thrown a single additional ray of light upon the subject under discussion, or had supported his arguments by a single additional fact. Not only within the walls of the House of Commons, said his great rival Charles Fox, but in the entire kingdom, there was no individual who could discourse more plausibly on any given subject, or who could amuse his audience by so extraordinary a mastery of words over ideas, as the First Minister of the Crown.

It was, in fact, in the atmosphere of the House of Commons that Lord North breathed the freest. He not only delighted in the war of wit and of words, but, moreover, those bitter personal attacks, which are usually gall and wormwood to a Minister of the Crown—those withering denunciations which drove Bute from power and hurried Canning to his grave—were apparently often encountered by him with feelings of satisfaction rather than of reluct-

ance or dismay. Formidable as were the perils and difficulties against which it was his constant lot to contend, and not less redoubtable as was the phalanx of eloquence and wit which was arrayed against him in Parliament, he ever, it is said, anticipated the re-assembling of Parliament with feelings of pleasure, nor ever beheld a Session draw near its close without regret.

But it was in opening a Budget in the House of Commons, and in the able and lucid manner in which he explained the state of the national finances, that Lord North usually achieved his completest triumphs. It was on these occasions that not only did his friends and supporters point exultingly to their leader as the chief pillar of the State, but even his enemies admitted that in this particular branch of political knowledge he was unrivalled. "Yesterday," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford on the 11th of April 1769,—"Lord North opened his Budget in the Committee of Ways and Means; and in the four-and-twenty years that I have sat in Parliament, in very few of which I have missed that famous day of the Sessions, I verily think I have never known any of his predecessors acquit themselves so much to the satisfaction of the House." * Doubtless the younger Pitt subsequently proved himself superior to Lord North as a financial exponent; but the star of Pitt was yet to rise in the ascendant.

In an age, in which the probity of public men was at a far lower ebb than at present, Lord North's political purity and disinterestedness were above suspicion. When he accepted office he was, comparatively speaking, a poor man. When he quitted it, he was no richer. When, on some occasion in the House of Commons, he was accused of clinging to office for the sake of its pecuniary emolu-

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 408. Again, Rigby writes on the 25th of April the following year;—"I am just come from the House of Commons, where Lord North has to-day opened his Budget in a most masterly manner." *Ibid.*, p. 411.

ments, there was observed in his countenance an expression of conscious integrity, and in his reply there was a calm and solemn dignity, which left a deep and lasting impression on his hearers. "I do not desire," he said, "to make any affected display of my personal purity and disinterestedness. I will, however, declare, with respect to my income, that most cheerfully would I give it all—not only the part which I derive from the public purse, but my own private fortune—if I could only thereby accelerate an honourable, speedy peace." In the opinion of Wraxall, who was present, there was not a member in the House, not one even of his bitterest enemies, but subscribed to the sincerity of that assertion. Perhaps the highest compliment, although an unintentional one, which was ever paid to the personal integrity of Lord North was by one of his most violent opponents, Sawbridge, when he applied to him the well-known words in Addison's "Cato"—

"Curse on his virtues! They've undone his country."*
Act 4, Sc. 1.

The acrimony, with which the Grenville and Rockingham parties had assailed the Duke of Grafton, was now, as a matter of course, turned upon Lord North. Lord Chatham thundered his fiercest invectives against the new Premier. Abuse and ridicule were heaped upon him in both Houses. During the Spring, the Ministry continued in a very tottering state. According to Lord Temple, it lived only upon moments. "The alarm at Court," writes Calcraft, "is beyond imagination: if our friends Mar. 13.
stand firm, they own all is over with them." † Junius was no less confident. In transmitting one of his bitterest invectives to Woodfall, he writes—"For G—'s sake, let

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 140—1.
† Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 426.

this appear to-morrow. Now is the crisis. I have no doubt we shall conquer them at last."

Among other expedients which, for some time past, had been resorted to by the Opposition for the purpose of embarrassing and bringing the King's Government into contempt, had been the encouragement in various cities and towns throughout the kingdom of certain remonstrances and petitions, in which the national grievances were emphatically set forth, and the King urgently importuned for redress. The language of these addresses was, generally speaking, sufficiently bold; in many instances it was positively violent. "Deign, most gracious Sovereign," were the words of the freeholders of the county of Middlesex, "to listen to the prayer of the most faithful of your subjects, and to banish from your royal favour, trust, and confidence for ever, those evil counsellors who have endeavoured to alienate your Majesty's affections from your most sincere and dutiful subjects, and who have TRAITOROUSLY DARED to depart from the spirit and letter of those laws, which have secured the throne of these realms to the House of Brunswick." *

These frequent and inconvenient remonstrances naturally caused much annoyance to the King, more especially when they were irregularly presented to him by the petitioners in person.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *March 6th*, 1770, ¾ p^t 11, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The two Sheriffs came about four this day, but I ordered that it should be told them that it was an improper time, and that the Court-days were the times they ought to deliver any message. I wish you would obtain the opinion of Lord Mansfield whether they can with propriety be received as on the occasions that

* Belsham's Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 248.

they address the Crown. That evidently would be the most likely means of putting an end to this stuff; but as the case seems so new I wish to hear his opinions previous to their coming to-morrow. I wish therefore you may be particularly early at St. James's to-morrow." *

Such of the remonstrances, to which we have referred, as the King regarded as intentionally disrespectful or irregular he was in the habit of either taking no notice of, or else of replying to them with a quiet rebuke. Among other addresses to the throne, a petition from the Livery and Corporation of the City of London, praying for a Dissolution of Parliament, had been regarded as unconstitutional, and had consequently received no answer. Accordingly, this petition was followed by a very unbecoming remonstrance, in which the citizens had the presumption to attribute the errors of successive Ministers to a "secret and malign influence," to which the Liberal party insisted that the Sovereign was a slave behind his throne.† This influence was, from time to time, laid indifferently at the door either of the Princess Dowager, Lord Bute, or the "King's Friends"; the latter consisting of persons who usually voted in Parliament in accordance with the King's known personal wishes, some of them no doubt from interested motives—but many from the veneration which they entertained for the kingly office, from the perfect confidence they placed in the King's judgment and integrity, and from the indignation they felt at the treatment he had experienced at the hands of the great Whig Lords. Doubtless the King, like the Duke of Bedford, or Lords Rockingham and Shelburne, had "friends" who looked up to him for favours, and with whom he occasionally consulted, but that there existed that "backstairs influence and clandestine Government"—that "Double Cabinet"—that "Interior Ministry"

* MS. original. † London Gazette from 13 to 17 March 1770.

—such as Burke has so vehemently denounced *—and much less that the King was ever a mere cypher in the hands of others, it is difficult to believe. "No one," writes Lord Brougham, "could ever charge him with ruling by Favourites; still less could any one, by pretending to be the people's choice, impose himself on his vigorous understanding. He had intimate friends, with whom much of his time was passed, but they were under his influence in all things, and influenced him in none." † At all events, the gross charge, which, on the present occasion, was publicly brought against the King by the citizens of London, could have been founded on no much better basis than common rumour or conjecture. The King replied to the remonstrance in terms of dignified displeasure. ‡ Both Houses of Parliament subsequently denounced it as emanating from a spirit of faction and insubordination; § and lastly, in all quarters, the loyal and the generous-hearted fired up at the systematic indignities offered to their Sovereign. Nevertheless, on the 23rd of May, the Lord Mayor, Beckford, accompanied by the members of the Common Council, and followed to St. James's by a noisy rabble, laid a third and still bolder remonstrance at the foot of the throne. His Majesty's reply was brief and decided. He should have been wanting, he said, alike to his subjects and to himself, had he concealed from them the dissatisfaction he felt at their late Address. In his former reply to them, he added, he had communicated to them his sentiments, and from those sentiments he considered it would be dangerous to the Constitution were he to depart. ‖

It was on this memorable occasion that, to the dismay of

* "Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents," *Burke's Works*, vol. i. pp. 131, 133, 136.

† Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 17. Ed. 1858.

‡ London Gazette from 13 to 17 March 1770.

§ *Ibid.*, from 20 to 24 March 1770.

‖ *Ibid.*, from 22 to 26 May 1770.

the courtiers, and contrary to all precedent and etiquette, Beckford had not only the bad taste to endeavour to draw his Sovereign into a personal controversy, but had also the impudence to address to him the language of reproof. "I have just come from Court," writes Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, "where the insolence of Beckford has exceeded all his, or the City's, past exploits."* The King, completely taken by surprise, made no response, a circumstance which seems to have encouraged Beckford to proceed in his indecent animadversions. Lord Bute, as will be perceived by Beckford's language, was still the bugbear, the *bête noire*, of the popular party. "Permit me, Sire, to observe," are said to have been the concluding words of the insolent citizen, "that whoever has already dared, or shall hereafter endeavour, by false insinuations and suggestions to alienate your Majesty's affections from your loyal subjects in general, and from the City of London in particular, and to withdraw your confidence in, and regard for, your people, is an enemy to your Majesty's person and family, a violater of the public peace, and a betrayer of our happy Constitution as it was established at THE GLORIOUS AND NECESSARY REVOLUTION."† At these words the King's countenance was observed to flush with anger. He still, however, preserved a dignified silence; and accordingly the citizens, after having been permitted to kiss the King's hand, were forced to retire dissatisfied from the presence-chamber.

According to the historian Belsham, Beckford's volunteer speech, as Walpole styles it, was delivered extempore "with great presence of mind and fluency of language."‡ On the other hand, however, it has been asserted that scarcely a syllable of that speech—in the form, at least, that it has descended to posterity—was delivered by Beckford; that in fact it was an afterthought manufactured for political

* Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 413.

† Annual Register for 1770, p. 203.

‡ Belsham's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 282.

and personal purposes. Certainly a letter, addressed the same day by his friend, Mr. Sheriff Townshend, to Lord Chatham, seems to throw a strong suspicion on its genuineness. "The Lord Mayor," writes the Sheriff, "made a reply to the King which greatly disconcerted the Court. He has *promised to recollect* what he said, and I fancy the *substance* will appear in the Papers to-morrow."* After all, the affair seems to have been a very foolish and vulgar one. "This is the first attempt," writes Rigby, "ever made to hold a colloquy with the King by any subject, and is indecent in the highest degree. There were very few Aldermen attended, and not great numbers of the Common Council. The rabble was of the very lowest sort."†

Nevertheless, it suited the purposes of faction at the time to extol Beckford's conduct and speech to the skies. "My mind," writes Lord Chatham to him on the 25th, "is big with admiration, thanks, and affection;" and he adds, "I mean to tell you only a plain truth when I say your Lordship's Mayoralty will be revered till the Constitution is destroyed and forgotten."‡ The Common Council not only formally signified to Beckford their approval of his conduct, but at his death, which took place scarcely more than four weeks afterwards, voted that his statue should be erected in the great Guild Hall of the city of London.§ Accordingly, under that time-

* Chatham Corresp., vol. 3, p. 458. Beckford's "volunteer speech" is stated, on more than one authority of no mean credit, to have been composed by the celebrated Horne Tooke. See the "*Correspondence of Gray and Mason*," p. 439, *note by the Rev. J. Milford*, and *Walpole's Letters*, vol. v. p. 275, *note*. Edition, 1840.

† Bedford Corresp., vol. iii. p. 414.

‡ Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 462.

§ Beckford's death, which is said to have been occasioned by the fever into which his blood was thrown by his late intemperate behaviour, took place on the 21st of June 1770, in the sixty-third year of his age. "He had boldness," writes Walpole, "promptness, spirit, a heap of confused knowledge displayed with the usual ostentation of his temper, and so uncorrected by judgment, that his absurdities were made more conspicuous by his vanity." *Walpole's Reign of George 3*, vol. iv. p. 156. Richard Cumberland, who met Beckford at Bubb Dodington's country-seat at Eastbury in Dorsetshire, describes him as "an intrepid talker;" loud, voluble, and self-sufficient; "galled by hits which he could not parry," and evidently in no respect

honoured roof, may be seen the effigy of the blustering citizen, representing him in the same attitude in which he is presumed to have rebuked his Sovereign, and having engraved upon the pedestal of the statue the apocryphal harangue with which he is said to have insulted him.

It was not long after Beckford's vapouring display at St. James's that the citizens of London, disappointed in their attempt to intimidate their Sovereign, found themselves at issue with the House of Commons on a subject much better deserving their consideration, and their advocacy of which was much more likely to earn them the gratitude of their fellow-countrymen. Previously to the year 1771, the practice of reporting and printing the speeches of Members of Parliament had not only been discountenanced by both Houses, but had subjected the printer to severe penalties. The law, it is true, had by various stratagems been partially eluded. Fictitious names were bestowed upon the principal speakers, and, under the appellation of a "Debate in the Political Club" or a "Debate in the Senate of Lilliput," the people of England had been provided with a certain, though very insufficient, amount of information in regard to the conduct of their representatives in Parliament. More recently, indeed, certain public journals had taken upon themselves to report the debates at greater length, and to be less mysterious in their communication of names; yet even so late as 1770, as may be seen by a glance at the Annual Register for that year, the Sovereign was still spoken of as the K—; Parliament as the P——, and the Ministers as the D— of G—— &c.*

The narrative of the dire offence which those unimportant 1771.

a match in conversational-powers for either Dodington himself or for Lord Holland, in whose society Cumberland met him. *Cumberland's Memoirs of Himself*, vol. i. p. 190.

* For some very interesting particulars relating to the means which the public had of obtaining information as to what was passing within the walls of Parliament in the middle of the last century, see *Cooke's History of Party*, vol. iii. p. 175, &c., and *May's Constitutional History of England*, vol. i. p. 408, &c.

innovations gave to the House of Commons—of the arrest in the City of two of the printers on the authority of the Speaker's warrant, and of the fearless conduct of Aldermen Wilkes * and Oliver, in discharging them from custody when brought before them as sitting magistrates—is one on which there is no occasion to dwell at length. The story, however, of the crowning insult offered by the City to the House of Commons presents features of interest which deserve to be recorded. Contrary, it should be observed, to the private and sensible views of the King, a Messenger, armed with a Speaker's warrant to arrest one Miller, a printer, presented himself at the door of this person's residence for the purpose of taking him into custody. Miller, however, being a Liveryman of the city of London, insisted that his rights as a citizen exempted him from this summary process, and on this plea opposed the arrest. A violent struggle between them was the consequence, in the midst of which a constable, who had been purposely stationed close to the spot, seemingly by Wilkes, suddenly made his appearance and, agreeably with private instructions which he had received, instead of aiding the officer of the House of Commons in the execution of his duty, carried him and the printer both prisoners to the Mansion House. The hearing of the case was appointed to take place at six o'clock the same
Mar. 15. evening, at which hour the new Lord Mayor, Brass Crosby,† and Aldermen Wilkes and Oliver had no sooner taken

* Wilkes's release from imprisonment, which had taken place on the 17th of April 1770, had been followed by his election on the 24th of that month to be an Alderman of the Ward of Farringdon Without. *Almon's Memoirs of Wilkes*, vol. iv. pp. 14, 15. See also *ante*, p. 441.

† Brass Crosby, M.P. for Honiton, had, according to Walpole, been "originally a low attorney, who had married his master's widow, and afterwards the widow of a carcass-butcher." *Memoirs of the Reign of George* 3, vol. iv. p. 304. Although a man of coarse manners and of rough appearance, he appears to have been very far from wanting in cleverness or sagacity. His death took place on the 14th of February 1793, at the age of sixty-seven. *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. lxiii. p. 188. Alderman Oliver, apparently a much younger man, and of very respectable character, was, according to Beloe, in his "external manners the perfect gentleman." He

their places on the magistrates' bench, than the Deputy Serjeant at Arms of the House of Commons presented himself before them, and, in the formidable name of the Speaker, made the double demand that the Messenger should be released from custody, and the person of Miller handed over to his charge. The City Magistrates, however, were not to be frightened from their purpose. According to their decision, the Messenger had not only been guilty of a heinous offence against the rights of an Englishman, and against the chartered privileges of a citizen of London, but, inasmuch as he was neither a constable nor a peace-officer, he had been guilty of the further misdeed of attempting an illegal arrest. Accordingly the printer Miller was at once discharged, and the Messenger committed to take his trial for an assault.

The indignation of the House of Commons, on receiving intelligence of this daring contempt of its authority, it would be difficult to imagine. Forthwith, orders were issued for the attendance of Wilkes at the bar of the House, and of the Lord Mayor and Alderman Oliver in their places, as Members of Parliament. In vain Lord North, more far-sighted than his friends, would have induced them to keep clear of violent measures. As he probably had anticipated, the House of Commons was not more bent on inflicting punishment on the City Magistrates, than the Lord Mayor and Oliver were anxious to share with Wilkes the glories of political martyrdom. The citizens of London, as a matter of course, sided with their magistrates. Accordingly, on the 25th, the day on which the latter had been ordered to attend in Parliament, they were accompanied to Westminster by a large concourse of disorderly persons, who hissed and hooted the more unpopular members of

was a West India merchant, and a few years afterwards died on the voyage to England on his return from visiting his estates in the West India Islands. *Sexagenarian*, vol. ii. pp. 24, 26.

both Houses; ill-treated Lord March, and, mistaking George Selwyn for Colonel Onslow, subjected him to much ill-usage.* The Lord Mayor, having been seized with an attack of gout in the course of the day, was compelled to return to the Mansion House; thus leaving his brother Alderman to encounter, single-handed, the wrath of the House of Commons. Willingly Lord North would have allowed the latter to escape with a trifling apology, but, tutored apparently by Wilkes, he refused to make the slightest concession. He not only pleaded guilty to the charge preferred against him, but insultingly gloried in the offence. He had acted, said Oliver, according to the dictates of his duty, his oath, and his conscience. He knew, he added, how little justice he had to expect from the hands of his judges, and he unhesitatingly defied their powers. When, at half-past three o'clock in the morning, a motion was made for committing him to the Tower, it was carried, after a violent discussion, by a majority of 170 votes against 38.†

Similar proceedings were repeated in the House of Commons on the 27th, the day on which the health of the Lord Mayor enabled him to re-appear in his place in Parliament, whither he was again accompanied by a tumultuous and infuriated rabble. Lord North, on this occasion, was more especially the object of popular rage. His hat was torn from his head; a constable's staff was thrust into his face, and an attempt made to drag him from his carriage, which, after he had alighted from it, was completely demolished. Among other persons, who were "rudely handled" by the mob, was their future idol, Charles Fox, at this time a Tory and a Lord of the Admiralty.‡ In the case of the Lord Mayor, as in that of

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 299.

† Parliamentary History, vol. xvii. col. 155.

‡ Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 302; Annual Register for 1771, p. 85: Parl. Hist., vol. xvii. col. 163.

Alderman Oliver, Lord North was only too desirous to adopt measures of conciliation rather than of severity. The former, however, was resolved on sharing martyrdom with his brother magistrate. He even rejected the option, which was offered to him in consideration of his health, of being lodged in the comfortable apartments of the Serjeant at Arms, instead of being sent to the Tower. He had acted, he said, as his conscience had prompted him. He had no favour to solicit from the House. His health had considerably improved, and consequently he saw no reason why he should be exempted from the same penalties which had been inflicted upon his honourable friend. Though his conduct, he added, had met with the condemnation of the House, he should nevertheless, under similar circumstances, again act precisely in the same manner. Of course the House of Commons, being thus openly set at defiance, had no alternative but to commit him to the Tower.* "If," writes the King to Lord North on the 17th of March, "the Lord Mayor and Oliver are not committed, the authority of the House is annihilated. Send Jenkinson to Lord Mansfield for his opinion of the best way of enforcing the commitment, if those people continue to disobey. You know well I was averse to meddling with the Printers, but now there is no retreating. The honour of the Commons must be supported."†

It was midnight when the Lord Mayor was led away in custody from the House of Commons. Had the King's advice been followed, he would have been conveyed to the Tower "by water privately, to avoid rescue,"‡ but by whatever motives Ministers may have been actuated, they overruled the prudent suggestion of their Sovereign. Accordingly, late

* Annual Register for 1771, p. 85.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 76. Edition, 1858.

‡ Letter to Lord North, *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 77.

as was the hour, the Lord Mayor, on making his appearance in custody in Palace Yard, was enthusiastically greeted by a large concourse of disorderly people, who, having removed the horses from his carriage, dragged him in triumph to the City entrance at Temple Bar, where they not only forced the Serjeant at Arms to quit the vehicle, but seriously discussed, in his hearing, the propriety of hanging him on the nearest lamp-post. The Lord Mayor, however, who, by this time, had become seriously alarmed at the aspect of affairs, effectually interposed in his behalf. The gentleman, he declared, was his particular friend: he was conducting him, not to prison, but to his apartments at the Mansion House. According to Walpole, when, at four o'clock in the morning, the gates of the Tower opened to receive the successor of Henry Fitz Alan and of Sir William Walworth, he was in such a state of hilarious inebriety, as to reflect no less discredit on the respectable civic office which he filled, than on the cause for which he had courted persecution.*

By the leaders of the Opposition party, no less than by the City of London, every possible mark of sympathy and respect was paid to the incarcerated magistrates. A train of great Whig Lords and Commoners, headed by the Marquis of Rockingham, went in sixteen carriages to pay them a visit of honour in the Tower. The Common Council not only publicly thanked them for their patriotic and courageous conduct, but also voted that the expense of employing counsel in their defence, and the cost of their entertainment in the Tower, should be defrayed out of the
April 5. City finances. In due time they were severally brought by writs of Habeas Corpus before the Courts of Common Pleas and Exchequer, the Judges of which tribunals decided in favour of the legality of their commitment, and accordingly they were re-conducted to the Tower.

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 304.

In the mean time, Wilkes, the chief fomenter of all this discord, had completely succeeded in his double object of keeping up his popularity, and of humiliating a House of Commons which had denounced him as unworthy to take his place upon its benches. Instead of obeying the repeated orders of the Commons to attend at the Bar of their House, he boldly wrote back to the Speaker that, unless as Member for Middlesex, he must decline setting his foot within their assembly. Thus the Commons were placed in great embarrassment. Alarmed at the prospect of becoming engaged in a fresh contest with so formidable a demagogue, they eventually elected the not very dignified alternative of citing him to appear at their bar on the 8th of April, and then adjourning, over that day, till the 9th. This tacit confession of weakness completed, of course, the triumph of Wilkes and of the popular view of the question at issue. Not only were the proceedings against the printers allowed to become a dead letter, but, from that time, the publishers of the public journals have been permitted to report the proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, with rare instances of molestation. As regards the Lord Mayor and Alderman Oliver, they remained in confinement till the 8th of May, when, the prorogation of Parliament having given them their liberty, they were escorted from the Tower to the Mansion House by a grand procession of the City dignitaries, arrayed in their robes of ceremony, and at night were honoured with illuminations and fireworks.

As usual, the recent arbitrary interference with the liberty of the Press, and the ill-will and distractions consequent upon it, were attributed by the Opposition to the personal prejudices and personal influence of the King. So far, however, from his having merited the cruel opprobriums which were heaped upon him at the time, we now know it to be a fact that, had his advice been happily followed, the

crusade against the printers of the newspapers would never have taken place. But, in the excited state of public feeling, truth and justice were completely lost sight of. The belief, long since exploded by every well-informed person, in the secret influence of the Princess Dowager, was revived to the King's bitter annoyance and loss of popularity. It was even asserted that "swarms" of Lord Bute's countrymen, the Scots, were selected to receive commissions in the Army and in the Royal Marines, with the express object of forwarding the despotic views of the Court.* Accordingly when, on the 28th of March, the King was on his way to the House of Lords, he was not only loudly hissed, but had an apple thrown at his head.† Again, on the 1st of April, the figures of his mother and Lord Bute were carried in carts to Tower Hill, where, after having been beheaded by chimney-sweepers in the presence of a large concourse of people, they were committed to the flames. Similar execution was done a few days afterwards on the effigies of other persons friendly to the King, whose imaginary dying confessions were afterwards hawked about the streets.‡ But the most daring insult to which the King was exposed was in the House of Commons in the person of his mother. On that
Mar. 25. day Alderman Townshend—"pale and ghastly from a sick bed, his hair lank, and his face swathed in linen"—rose from his seat and delivered the boldest and most insulting oration which, since the days of Henrietta Maria, had been levelled against the mother of a King of England. There was one aspiring woman, he said, who, to the dishonour of the British name, was allowed to direct the operations of the despicable Ministers of the Crown. "Does any gentleman," he added, "wish to hear what

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 310.
† *Ibid.*, p. 305.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 307; Annual Register for 1771, pp. 89, 91.

woman I allude to? If he does, I will tell him. It is the Princess Dowager of Wales. I aver we have been governed ten years by a woman. It is not the sex I object to, but the government. Were we well ruled, the ruler would be an object of little signification. It is not the greatness of the criminal's rank which should prevent you punishing the criminality."* Such language as this had doubtless been caught from the authoritative example of Lord Chatham, who, no long time previously, had had the cruelty to startle the House of Lords by hinting at the connexion between Lord Bute and the King's mother, as being analogous to that of Mazarin and Anne of Austria. "That Favourite," he had exclaimed in allusion to Bute, "is at the present moment abroad, yet his influence, by his confidential agents, is as powerful as if he were at home. Who does not know the Mazarinade of France?—that Mazarin absent was Mazarin still? And what is there, I would ask, to distinguish the two cases?"† And yet, according to all reasonable evidence, nine years had passed since the Princess Dowager had exercised the slightest political influence over the mind of her son. "Perhaps," observed the Duke of Gloucester to Horace Walpole, "you think the King loved my mother. I assure you he did not, and I will give you a proof. The very day the Queen arrived, three hours afterwards, when she was gone to be dressed for the wedding, I was left alone with the King; and he told me he had already given her a caution never to be alone with my mother, for she was an artful woman and would try to govern her."‡

From the time that the Legislature discontinued its persecution of Wilkes, his name ceased to be either a

* Parliamentary History, vol. xvii. col. 122; Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 300; Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 134.

† Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. col. 841—3; Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. v. p. 388; Quarterly Review, vol. cv. pp. 471, 472.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 154.

watchword on the lips of his admirers or a bugbear to his political enemies. Nevertheless his eminent, though irregular, services in the cause of the Constitution, were not forgotten by his fellow-countrymen. On the dissolution of Parliament in the year 1774, the county of Middlesex again returned him as its representative, when not only did the House of Commons offer no opposition to his taking his seat among them, but, eight years afterwards, on his moving that the former Resolutions against him be erased from the journals of the House, he had the satisfaction of carrying his motion by as important a majority, as that which, in former days, had voted for his expulsion. The latter period of Wilkes's life was passed in the pursuit of literature, and in the enjoyment of civic honours and civic wealth. Having previously filled the office of Sheriff, he became Lord Mayor in 1774, and in 1779 was elected to fill the lucrative post of Chamberlain of the City of London. From this period he ceased to be a patriot. Although political corruption remained as rife as ever, and the liberties of his country still required his watchfulness, his voice was never raised in deprecation of the one, nor in vindication of the other. And yet this was the man over whose last resting-place may be read the words—"The remains of John Wilkes, a Friend to Liberty."* During the "Protestant riots," in 1780, this celebrated incendiary not only sided with the cause of order, but discharged his magisterial duties with the most praiseworthy zeal and alacrity. To Mrs. Thrale, Dr. Johnson writes on the 9th of June—"Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper." On the 7th, when an attack was made by the rioters on the

May 8, 1782.

* This inscription may be seen on a tablet in Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, in the vaults of which building the celebrated democrat lies buried. *Cunningham's London*, pp. 25 and 215.

Bank of England, we find Alderman Wilkes heading the party which drove them away.*

During his latter days, Wilkes not only became a courtier, but was a frequent attendant at the levees of George the Third. On one of these occasions the King happened to enquire after his "old friend," Serjeant Glynn, who had been Wilkes's Counsel during his former seditious proceedings. "My *friend*, Sir!" replied Wilkes; "he is no friend of mine; he was a Wilkite, Sir, which I never was." —"In his real politics," writes his friend Butler, the Reminiscent, "he was an aristocrat, and would much rather have been a favoured courtier at Versailles than the most commanding orator in St. Stephen's Chapel. His distresses threw him into politics." † He once dined with George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales, when overhearing the Prince speaking in somewhat disparaging language of his father, with whom he was then notoriously on bad terms, he seized an opportunity of proposing the health of the King. "Why, Wilkes," said the Prince, "how long is it since you became so loyal?"—"Ever since, Sir," was the reply, "I had the honour of becoming acquainted with your royal highness."

The old age of Wilkes was not an ungraceful one. "His powers of conversation," writes Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "survived his other bodily faculties. I have dined in company with him not long before his decease, when he was extenuated and enfeebled to a great degree; but his tongue retained all its former activity, and seemed to have outlived his other organs. Even in corporeal ruin, and obviously approaching the termination of his career, he formed the charm of the assembly." ‡ Wilkes survived till the 26th of December 1797, when he expired at his

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, by Croker, p. 648, *bis*. Edition, 1847.
† Butler's Reminiscences, p. 73.
‡ Wraxall's Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 297. Third Edition.

house in Grosvenor Square, at the south-west corner of South Audley Street, in his seventy-first year.

From the time of Wilkes's triumph over the House of Commons, till the breaking out of the civil war in America, in 1775, the King and his favourite minister were left in a state of comparative repose. "The King," writes Lord Barrington on the 10th of January 1771, "though most shamefully attacked in newspapers, with a licentiousness which his servants are very blamable to suffer, gains ground in the opinion and esteem of his People, and the Ministry, though not highly rated, is not disliked." * Fortunately for the King and for Lord North, not only, during the interval in question, did few questions of importance come under the notice of Parliament, but there were other circumstances which combined to produce a grateful lull in the political horizon. Junius had laid down his pen. The inflammatory anathemas of Wilkes had been silenced. Beckford was in his grave. At length, the "Great Families" had discovered that the closet of the Sovereign was not so easy to be taken by storm. The Grenville party had been broken up, partly by the death of George Grenville and partly by the defection of Lords Suffolk and Hyde. Lord Temple, deprived of the weight and countenance of his brother, George Grenville, could scarcely command a single vote in either House of Parliament. Lord Rockingham and his friends, dispirited by repeated Parliamentary defeats, intimated their intention of confining their opposition, for the future, to resisting any attacks that might be made upon the Constitution, and of deferring till less unpropitious times any systematic onslaught on the present Ministers. Lastly Lord Chatham, from the absence of political agitation, had not only become nearly as powerless as Lord Temple, but seems to have almost reconciled

* Letter to Sir Andrew Mitchell: *Ellis's Original Letters*, vol. iv. p. 530. *Second Series.*

himself to the Tory Administration of Lord North. "I have long held one opinion," he writes to Lord Shelburne on the 6th of March 1774, "as to the stability of Lord North's situation. He serves the Crown more successfully and more efficiently upon the whole, than any other man to be found could do." *

The following further letters, addressed by the King, between the years 1768 and 1770, to his two Principal Secretaries of State, Lord Weymouth and General Conway, continue to throw a valuable light on the King's character and motives, as well as to illustrate the unceasing and meritorious interest which he took in public affairs. They severally for the first time appear in print.

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

"RICHMOND LODGE, $\frac{5}{10}$ past one, P.M.

"Lieutenant General Conway is too well acquainted with my sentiments to doubt my desire at all times of saving the lives of my subjects even when they don't perhaps much deserve it; but my duty prevents me, I hope, from yielding to my feelings, when they would carry me too far. Though I own I think the Judge's Report far from favourable; yet as the General's great humanity has made him afresh recommend the unhappy criminal for my mercy, I do consent to it on condition of transportation for life." †

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Feb.* 16th, 1768, $\frac{7}{8}$ p^{t} 10, P.M.

"Lieutenant General Conway,

"The entering on fresh instances of corruption, will, I fear, protract the Session, particularly if every gentleman that meets with difficulty in obtaining the Seat he wishes in Parliament, is to lay the affair before the House of Commons.

"The Instruction, moved for the Committee on the Bribery Bill,

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. pp. 332—3.

† The originals of this and the next letter are preserved in the British Museum, Egerton MS. 982. fo. 36, and 982. fo. 109.

relative to the votes of Custom House, and other officers having places under the Crown, seems very extraordinary, and can have been proposed solely from a motive of showing an inclination to be impertinent, and run after that empty shadow, Popularity. I am totally indifferent as to the Borough of Aldborough being taken notice of, as I can rely on the delicacy of the Duke of Grafton's conduct on all occasions."

The unpublished letters which follow are addressed exclusively to Lord Weymouth.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"RICHMOND LODGE, *May 27th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{61}$ p^t 8, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The draught to Sir Joseph Yorke so thoroughly places the negotiation of the Westphalian Bishoprics on the foundation that alone brought me to enter into it, that I cannot but highly approve of it."

"RICHMOND LODGE, *July 8th*, 1768, $\frac{m}{61}$ p^t 9, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Though adverse in general to signing a respite previous to conviction, yet on so extraordinary an occasion I do it with pleasure, as I think it my duty, in the most public manner, to show my countenance to those, who with spirit resist the daring spirit that has of late been instilled into the populace." *

"RICHMOND LODGE, *Sep. 25th*, 1768, seven o'clock, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I am extremely glad to find you propose going to-morrow to the Duke of Grafton's, as I hope it may be productive of great good by removing some unhappy delicacies that have delayed bringing a certain affair to a conclusion, that I am quite impatient to see perfected."

* On the previous day, July 7, the Grand Jury for the county of Middlesex, had found a bill for wilful murder against Samuel Gillam, Esq., one of the Magistrates who had ordered the soldiers to fire on the rioters in St. George's Fields, on the 10th of May. He was tried on the 11th of July, and acquitted. *Annual Register for* 1768, pp. 136, 137.

"$\frac{m}{3}$ p^t 3, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Nothing can be more just than the ordering the two convicts for the riot at Brentford to be respited for a week, that the Judges may have time to report if there be any alleviating circumstances; particularly as some have imagined that the spirit of Party, rather than that of Justice, influenced the Jury." *

"Queen's House, *Novr.* 26, 1769, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Being this day confined by a severe cold, and imagining that the very agreeable report of the Judges may require some conversation on the proper mode of making this known, I desire you will come here at any time most convenient to yourself this day."

"Queen's House, *Jan.* 23*rd*, 1770, $\frac{m}{6}$ p^t 9, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I sincerely congratulate you on the safe delivery of Lady Weymouth of a second son.† The Queen has desired me to express the pleasure she also feels at an event that must give you so much joy."

"Queen's House, *April* 12*th*, 1770, $\frac{m}{1}$ p^t 11.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The real regard I have for you would have inclined me with pleasure to have advanced Mr. Thynne on the present occasion, had I not found that his not taking an active part in

* The persons referred to by the King were evidently Edward Quirk and Lawrence Balf who, on the 14th of January, had been found guilty at the Old Bailey Sessions of aiding and abetting in the wilful murder of George Clark, an Attorney's Clerk, who, during the election riots at Brentford, had received a blow on his head with a bludgeon, of which he died in a few days. The prisoners were respited from time to time till the 8th of March, when they received the King's pardon. *Annual Register for* 1769, pp. 67, 68, 69, 75, 80.

† Lady Weymouth on this day had been brought to bed of her tenth child, George, who, in June 1826, succeeded his uncle, Henry Frederick, as second Baron Carteret of the Thynne family.

debate would have hurt those that stand forward in the House of Commons, and knowing your zeal for my service would not make you wish what could be in the least detrimental to it." *

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *April 15th*, 1770, $\frac{n}{12}$ p^t 9, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Having read on Friday, in your draft to Lord Harcourt, that you had received a private letter from him that requires your speaking to me, after which you will give him a speedy answer, I desire you will call here any time after seven to-morrow evening; as I do not choose to talk on business immediately on coming from the chapel on Sacrament days."

"RICHMOND LODGE, *Sept. 30th*, 1770, six o'clock, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I thoroughly approve of the openness and clearness with which you have, in the enclosed draft, given your ideas to Lord Hillsborough on the necessity of more exactly defining your Department, in case war should arise, lest that secrecy and despatch, on which the success of war must so greatly depend, should suffer by extending the business to too many offices.

"Your conduct, during the time you have held the Seals, makes me desirous that this affair should be so far accommodated, as to enable you to feel pleasant in your Department. On the other hand, I should be sorry Lord Hillsborough felt himself aggrieved. I know your prudence can be relied on, and your wish of no further increase of Department than what the good of the Service requires. I therefore trust, when you both coolly discuss this

* The "Mr. Thynne" referred to in this note was clearly Lord Weymouth's only surviving brother, the Hon. Henry Frederick Thynne, at this time Master of the Household to George III. In a note from the King to Lord North dated the same day, (April 12,) he intimates the "impossibility" of his complying with Lord Weymouth's request for his brother's advancement, and his intention of writing him a "civil note" to that effect. *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3*, vol. i. p. 71. In the month of December following, Mr. Thynne was appointed Joint Paymaster General, and, on the 29th of January 1784, was advanced to the Peerage by the title of Baron Carteret. He died on the 18th of June 1826, at the age of ninety-one.

matter, that such an expedient may occur as may be satisfactory. I am anxious that this may be previous to my seeing you on Wednesday."

"Richmond Lodge, *October 15th*, 1770, $\frac{m}{51}$ p^t 4, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The Spanish ambassador's being confined to a convention explains his not acting agreeably to what the Duke of Choiseul meant to advise him. I hope his instructions, in consequence of the messenger he will send to-night to his Court, will be very ample, and such as may enable him to finish this affair in the manner we have a right to expect, as every delay will augment difficulties." *

"Queen's House, *Novr.* 8, 1770, $\frac{m}{51}$ p^t 8, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Your account of Lord Mansfield is very satisfactory and ensures a very handsome appearance to-morrow. I can, in return, acquaint you that Lord Talbot will certainly act also as he ought. When you have been at the meeting at the Duke of Grafton's, I wish you would call here this evening that I may hear some particulars with regard to the appearance there, and also of your conversation at Ken Wood."

"Queen's House, *Novr. 21st*, 1770, $\frac{m}{11}$ p. 6, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The enclosed project of a Declaration, which you have only received to assist your memory, is quite inadmissible. I hope the conversation you have had with the Ambassador will make him draw up one more calculated to terminate this affair amicably. This one cannot require my adding anything more." †

* "By an act of the Governor of Buenos Ayres, in seizing by force one of my Possessions"—runs the Speech from the throne on the 13th of November, 1770—"the honour of my Crown and the security of my people's rights were become deeply affected. Under these circumstances I did not fail to make an immediate demand from the Court of Spain of such satisfaction as I had a right to expect for the injury I had received." The King's Speech, on the 8th of May following, announces that he has obtained from his Catholic Majesty the satisfaction he had demanded. *Parliamentary History*, vol. xvi. p. 1031; vol. xvii. p. 230.

† This note of course refers, like the preceding one of the 15th of October, to the celebrated dispute with Spain relative to the right of possession to the Falkland Islands.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Connexion of the North American Colonies with England—The Americans, and especially Massachusetts, take their stand against taxation by the Home Government—Arbitrary behaviour of Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State—Assembly of Massachusetts abruptly dissolved by Sir John Bernard, the Governor—"Committees of Correspondence" established in the Provinces—Infatuation of the English Ministers in reference to Colonial affairs—Customs Riots at Boston—Coercion continued by Government—Organized resistance in the American Provinces—Public feeling in England.

At the time when George the Third ascended the throne of these realms, the Americans were a free, prosperous and happy people. "They are governed," were the words of Benjamin Franklin in 1766, "at the expense only of a little pen, ink, and paper. They are led by a thread. They have not only a respect but an affection for Great Britain, for its laws, its customs, and manners; and even a fondness for its fashions."* When the Americans spoke of England it was under the endearing appellation of 'Home.' Yet, affectionately attached as they were to the mother country, and proud as they were of their connexion with the land of Shakespeare, of Bacon, and of Marlborough, they were still more proud of their descent from those virtuous and uncompromising patriots who, having flown to the forest and the prairie, in order to escape from the tyranny of the Old World, had founded that admirable system of political, social, and financial economy, of which, till the middle of the last century, their descendants had been left in the undisturbed enjoyment.

* Evidence of Franklin before a Committee of the House of Commons, February 1766: *Franklin's Life and Writings*, vol. ii. p. 360. Third Edition.

Previously to the separation of the American Colonies from Great Britain, the administration of public affairs, in the different Provinces, had been vested in a Governor whose appointment emanated from the Sovereign, assisted by a Council, and controlled by a House of Assembly, the latter consisting of members elected by the freeholders in the rural districts and by the householders in the different towns. The power of levying taxes lay exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Houses of Assembly, and if there was a privilege of which the Colonists were more jealous and sensitive than of any other, it consisted in having the full enjoyment of that hitherto undisputed prerogative. They had ever strenuously denied the right of the British Legislature to impose taxes upon them, although, on the other hand, whenever they had been appealed to in a constitutional form, their Assemblies had always cheerfully and generously voted pecuniary aid to the Crown. For instance, during the recent hostilities on American soil between Great Britain and France, the Colonists had raised, clothed, and paid by voluntary aid, nearly twenty-five thousand men, a force equal to that which had been despatched across the Atlantic by the mother-country.*

Such, then, was the political and financial relationship which existed between the two countries, when, in an evil hour, Grenville conceived the project of relieving the necessities of Great Britain at the expense of her Colonies. The consternation and distress which that disastrous project kindled in the minds of the American people have been already cursorily set forth in these pages. They at once perceived the vast importance of the question at issue. The doctrine, they argued, of the Parliament of Great Britain having a right to levy taxes on every part of the Empire, might be a sound one so long as the whole dominions were repre-

* Franklin's Evidence before the House of Commons: *Life and Writings*, vol. ii. p. 377, 3rd Edition.

sented in one Assembly, but now that those dominions had become so extended as to be represented in several distinct Assemblies, the demand was entirely opposed to the spirit of the Constitution. Were the Colonists, they said, once to admit the principle of right on the part of the mother-country to tax them, the mischiefs which it would produce might be irremediable. Such a concession on their part might lead to the worst of tyrannies; to insolvency, perhaps to ruin. In respect to the Stamp Act itself, they insisted that it was an arbitrary, an unjust, and a cruel impost. It was arbitrary, they argued, because the Colonists were unrepresented in the Legislature which claimed the right to tax them; it was unjust because they had always liberally contributed towards supplying the wants of the Empire; and it was cruel because it was calculated to render property insecure, and to fill men's minds with the gloomiest apprehensions for the future. Taxation and Representation, they insisted, were, and ought to be, inseparable.

The original founders of American civilisation and power had been men of no ordinary heroism and virtue. Unlike the ordinary class of primitive settlers in distant and savage regions, they had been men of education, sagacity, and incorruptible morals. The Pilgrim Fathers had carried with them from their native land the rigid doctrines of Calvin, those doctrines which, in every country in which they have taken root, have alike engendered an indomitable hatred of tyranny, and encouraged wisdom, bravery, and virtue. They had been driven to the "hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men," not by poverty nor misfortune, nor by the desire of gain, but by a yearning for the free possession of democratic liberty, and of the right of worshipping their Maker in their own fashion, and after their own hearts. Not that they had shaken off, or harboured any wish to shake off, their alle-

giance to their Sovereign. It was no averson to the kingly office which had impelled them to fly from the old world, but dread of the power and jurisdiction of Bishops, of tithes, of Acts of Conformity, and of the tyranny of the Spiritual Courts.*

The descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers had inherited the principles as well as the prejudices of their Puritan ancestors. They too were loyal; not only because they regarded loyalty as a sacred duty, but also because, in the event of war or other emergency, it assured them of the powerful protection and alliance of Great Britain, and because their general submission to one common lord and master prevented discord among themselves. While, however, they admitted that their interests, as well as their duty, enjoined them to preserve their ancient relationship with the mother-country, they, on the other hand, insisted upon their immemorial right to frame their own laws, so long as those laws were not inimical to the interests of Great Britain. Let the parent-land, they said, content herself with the commercial wealth which she derives from her Colonies. Let her refrain from any attempt to coerce them by arbitrary enactments. Let her continue to them their time-honoured privileges as citizens of free and chartered States; and more especially let her recall her preposterous assertion of right

* "They were Communities," writes one of the earlier historians of the American Revolution, "of separate independent individuals, for the most part employed in cultivating a fruitful soil, and under no general influence but of their own feelings and opinions. They were not led by powerful families or by great officers in Church or State. Luxury had made but very little progress among their contented unaspiring farmers. The large extent of territory gave each man an opportunity of fishing, fowling, and hunting, without injury to his neighbour. Every inhabitant was, or easily might be, a freeholder. Settled on lands of his own, he was both farmer and landlord. Having no superior to whom he was obliged to look up, and producing all the necessaries of life from his own grounds, he soon became independent. His mind was equally free from all the restraints of superstition. No ecclesiastical establishments invaded the rights of conscience, or fettered the free-born mind. At liberty to act and think as his inclination prompted, he disdained the ideas of dependence and subjection." *Ramsay's History of the Revolution of South Carolina*, vol. i. p. 11, Trenton, 1785.

to levy taxes on them against their own free will and consent, and they, on their side, would be ever ready to fly to her assistance in her hour of need, both with their purses and with their swords.

It had been argued, by Franklin, that the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act would fill the Americans with gratitude and joy; that it would revive their former veneration for the wisdom and justice of the British Parliament, and rekindle in their breasts their ancient sentiments of loyalty towards the throne, and their affectionate attachment to the land of their forefathers.* Possibly, but for the passing of the famous Declaratory Act—in which Great Britain had deliberately recorded on the Statute-book her assertion of abstract right to tax her Colonies—Franklin's prognostications might have been verified. Even as it was, the repeal of the hateful Stamp Act had in a great measure tranquillised the public mind. Massachusetts voted two addresses of thanks to the mother-country; one to the King for having given his assent to the Repeal Bill, and one to the "divers noblemen and gentlemen" whose exertions had been instrumental in carrying it through Parliament.† At a great meeting in Philadelphia, it was unanimously resolved that on the King's birthday, the 4th of June, each person should appear in new attire, the manufactures of the mother-country. The Assembly of Virginia even went so far as to vote the erection of a statue of the King in acknowledgment of the repeal of the Stamp Act.‡ Such, then, was the improved state of popular feeling in America towards Great Britain, when Charles Townshend had the rashness and infatuation to re-open the difficult question of Colonial Taxation, by introducing into

* Franklin's Life and Times, vol. i. pp. 324, 326, 3rd Edition.

† Massachusetts State Papers, p. 92; Boston, 1818.

‡ Grahame's History of the United States, vol. iv. p. 236; Gordon's Hist. of American Independence, vol. i. p. 212.

Parliament his famous Bill for imposing duties upon articles imported into the American Colonies. Little could that mercurial Minister have foreseen the mighty and disastrous consequences of which he was destined to be the originator! To please universally, according to Burke, was the paramount end and aim of this "candidate for contradictory honours." But, as Burke further observes—"To tax and to please, no more than to love and to be wise, is not given to men."* Like many other statesmen of his day, Charles Townshend had taught himself to make a great distinction between external and internal taxation. So long as Great Britain restricted herself to levying duties on articles of commerce imported into America—that is to say, so long as she abstained from any attempt to extort a revenue from the internal resources of the Colonies—it was imagined by Townshend and his disciples that the majority of the American people would patiently submit to the provisions of his memorable budget.†

To this infatuated assumption on the part of the British Government, the conduct of the people of America very speedily gave the lie. Already the fluctuating policy of the British Legislature, as well as the haughty and insolent language applied to them in Parliament, had roused their feelings to a high pitch of indignation, when the passing of Charles Townshend's portentous Act completed their exasperation and alarm. It was argued by them, and not without sound and sagacious reasons, that if one such

* Speech on American Taxation: *Burke's Works*, vol. i. p. 172.

† It must be admitted, as some palliation for Charles Townshend's untoward policy, that Franklin himself, in his evidence before the House of Commons in February the preceding year, had made a wide distinction between external and internal taxation. "An external tax," he said, "is a duty laid on commodities imported. That duty is added to the first cost and other charges on the commodity, and when it is offered to sale makes a part of the price. If the people do not like it at that price they refuse it. They are not obliged to pay it. But an internal tax is forced from the people without their consent, if not laid by their own representatives." *Franklin's Life and Writings*, vol. ii. p. 365, 3rd Edition.

act of arbitrary innovation were to be tamely submitted to, other and still more oppressive measures would in all probability be the consequence. "Let me exhort and conjure you," was the wise advice of Junius to the British nation, "never to suffer an invasion of your political Constitution, however minute the instance may appear, to pass by without a determined, persevering resistance. One precedent creates another. They soon accumulate and constitute law. What yesterday was fact, to-day is doctrine." * Such, also, were the arguments made use of by the American people themselves. The pride and satisfaction with which they had hitherto contemplated their happy state of political freedom, and their exemption from all arbitrary interference in their affairs; the dread which they naturally entertained lest the present odious impost might prove the forerunner of a regular system of internal taxation; the melancholy prospect of having their energies cramped, and their resources drained by future imperious demands on the part of the parent-country; every feeling, in fact, which self-interest and self-respect were able to dictate, impelled them to oppose the tyranny with which they were threatened. Moreover, they

* Dedication of the Letters of Junius to the English Nation, p. iv. Edition, 1794. "Nothing," prophetically writes the accomplished General Charles Lee, on the 20th of October, to King Stanislaus of Poland, "could make the American Colonists cast off their obedience, or even respect, to their mother-country, but some attempt on the essence of their liberty, such as undoubtedly the Stamp Act was. If it had remained unrepealed, and admitted as a precedent, they would have been slaves to all intents and purposes, as their whole property would lie at the mercy of the Crown's Minister and the Minister's Ministers, the House of Commons, who would find no end to the necessity of taxing these people, as every additional tax would furnish the means of adding to their respective wages. If the humours, which this accursed attempt has raised, are suffered to subside, the inherent affection which the Colonies have for the mother-country, and clashings of interest one with another, [*sic orig.*,] will throw everything back in the old channel, which indeed is the case already. But if another attack of the same nature should be made upon them by a wicked, blundering Minister, I will venture to prophesy that this country [England,] will be shaken to its foundation in its wealth, credit, naval force, and interior population." *Life of General Charles Lee, in Sparks's American Biography*, vol. viii. p. 32, 2nd Series.

were wounded in their affections, as well as angered and alarmed. Mournfully and solemnly they arraigned the unkindness of the mother-country. That their own flesh and blood, they said; that the men, many of whose forefathers had fought side by side with their own in defence of the great cause of liberty, should come forward to rob them of the priceless privileges which their ancestors had carried with them to the haunts of the wild beast and of the wilder Indian, was indeed a wrong which they had little right to expect, and which filled their breasts alike with sorrow and consternation.

Thus was a spirit of resistance lighted up across the Atlantic which was destined to produce one of the fiercest and most momentous struggles in the annals of the human race. Of the different American provinces, that of Massachusetts, whose sons boasted a lineal descent from the Pilgrim Fathers, was decidedly the most active in organizing opposition to the ill-judged policy of Great Britain. As the time drew near for the newly appointed Revenue Officers to commence their hateful duties, the ferment in the Province grew more and more general. The Press incessantly thundered forth its invectives against the tyranny of Great Britain. Already a powerful combination, composed of the principal persons in Boston, had been formed against the commercial interests of the mother-country. With little hesitation, not only the people of Boston, but other communities in Massachusetts, pledged themselves to abstain from the use of every article of luxury imported from Great Britain; to extend, on the contrary, every possible encouragement to the consumption of goods of American manufacture, and, further, to purchase no British wares or products whatever, except in cases where they might be absolutely indispensable. Lastly, the Assembly of Massachusetts resorted to the bold measure of addressing circular letters to the other Provinces of America, in which they urged them to

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resist, by all constitutional means, the recent oppressive enactments of Great Britain, and to aid them, in the mean time, with their counsel and advice. "Such an universal
Nov. 18. detestation," writes Governor Wentworth to Lord Rockingham, "has been unwisely excited, that every means will be practised to evade the laws of trade." *—"Let Britain," exclaimed Otis in the Assembly of Massachusetts, "rescind her measures, or her authority is lost for ever." †

Unfortunately, for some time past, the civil servants of the Crown in America had been chiefly composed of persons many of whom were totally disqualified either to conciliate others, or to acquire respect for themselves. Generally speaking, the Governors of the Provinces were men without proper experience or liberal education; while their subordinates, having been in numerous instances chosen from the least moral and least respectable classes of English society, jobbed and plundered wherever they could find an opportunity. "Most of the places in the gift of the Crown," writes General Huske in 1758, "have been filled with broken Members of Parliament of bad if any principles, pimps, valets de chambre, electioneering scoundrels, and even livery-servants. In one word, America has for years been made the hospital of England." ‡—"Under the British authority," were the words of Chief Justice Drayton to the people of South Carolina in 1776, "Governors were sent over to us who were utterly unacquainted with our local interests, the genius of the people, and our laws. Generally, they were but too much disposed to obey the mandates of an arbitrary Minister, and, if the Governor behaved ill, we could not by any peaceable means procure redress." §

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 90.
† Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. p. 271.
‡ Phillimore's Memoirs of Lord Lyttelton, vol. ii. p. 604.
§ Ramsay's History of the Revolution in South Carolina, vol. i. p. 121.

At the period of which we are writing, the Governor of the important Province of Massachusetts was a retired barrister, Mr., afterwards Sir Francis Bernard, a scion of an ancient family in the county of Northampton, and a person of considerable accomplishments and of no mean abilities. By the Ministry at home, and by the people of Massachusetts, Sir Francis was regarded in a very different light. By the former he was respected and upheld as one of the most zealous and meritorious of public servants, while, according to the latter, he was a mere parsimonious, time-serving, timid, and double-dealing placeman. He was not only, said the Colonists, habitually insolent in his individual intercourse with them, but even treated the Council and Assembly of the Province with insufferable arrogance. Furthermore, they charged him with unconstitutional conduct in having made attempts to exceed his legitimate authority as Governor, and especially with having systematically misrepresented their actions and motives to the Government at home. Scarcely an individual in the Province but seems to have held him in aversion. In vain the Colonists had over and over again petitioned for his recall. The infatuated Ministers responded to their complaints by elevating him to a baronetcy.*

If there was a man more obstinate and prejudiced than the Governor of Massachusetts it was apparently the Secretary of State at home, to whom Bernard's partial despatches were necessarily forwarded. Wills, Earl of Hillsborough, to whom the management of American affairs was principally entrusted, was, according to Horace Walpole a mere " pompous composition of ignorance and want of

* This unpopular public servant appears to have been a first cousin of William Viscount Barrington, the well-known statesman of the reigns of George II. and George III., to which family connexion he was doubtless indebted for having been appointed, in the first instance, Governor of New Jersey, and afterwards Governor of Massachusetts. His death took place on the 16th of June 1779.

judgment."* Much injustice there doubtless is in this sweeping denunciation, yet, on the other hand, certain it appears to be, that, at so difficult and delicate a political crisis, Lord Hillsborough was not a fit person to be Secretary for the Colonies. To a mind, alike wanting in judgment and warped by aristocratic prejudices, the great Revolution which was dawning in America was nothing but a vulgar democratic movement. The noble peasantry of New England were little better than a rabble. The founders of the American Republic were a set of turbulent demagogues, and the spirited conduct of the Assembly of Massachusetts, in transmitting circular letters to the other Colonies, an act of unpardonable insolence. Accordingly, in an
Apr. 22, 1768. imperious and ill-advised despatch, Bernard was instructed by him to call upon the Assembly to rescind its former vote, and, in the event of refusal, to declare its dissolution.

A people, boasting to be of the same flesh and blood as the men who had sent Charles the First and Strafford to the block, were little likely to endure with patience the bullying mandate of a British Minister. Accordingly, the Assembly of Massachusetts not only adhered to their
July 1. previous Resolution, but confirmed it by a larger majority than the first. "If the votes of this House," argued the Assembly, "are to be controlled by the direction of a Minister, we have left to us but a vain semblance of liberty."† Bernard had now no choice but to obey his instructions, and accordingly he declared the Assembly to be dissolved.

It was no idle charge which was subsequently preferred against Lord Hillsborough, both by the Duke of Grafton and Lord Camden, that his ill-judged and arbitrary conduct at this period completed the exasperation, if not the impla-

* Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 199. Lord Hillsborough, who had been Treasurer of the Chamber to George II., was created Marquis of Downshire August 19th, 1789, and died October 13th, 1793.

† Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. p. 272.

cability, of the American people. As a natural consequence of his treatment of the Assembly of Massachusetts, he arrayed against the British Government the Assemblies of every other Province. Throughout the vast continent of America the legislative bodies almost universally voted their approval of the patriotic proceedings of the people of Massachusetts. "Committees of Correspondence" * were set on foot to enable the different States to consult and advise with each other with ease and safety. Imitating the example of Massachusetts, thousands of persons, styling themselves the "Sons of Liberty," enrolled themselves in all parts of America into "non-importation" associations. Even the ladies, assuming the name of the "Daughters of Liberty," combined in abstaining from the use of luxuries imported from Great Britain, not even making an exception on behalf of their favourite beverage, tea. When, at a later period, the candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts presented themselves for examination at Harvard University, they were dressed in black cloth, entirely the manufacture of New England.† America, it was maintained, had reached her national majority. The parent country had no more right to rob her of her resources than the guardian of a ward, on his coming of age, had a right to pillage him of his estate. As well might the Princes of Germany claim authority over the British people, because the ancestors of the latter had emigrated from German soil.‡ "United," said the Americans, "we conquer; divided we die." §

Lamentable indeed was the want of information and intelligence displayed by the British Ministers in regard to everything that related to the feelings, the interests, and the

* Respecting the origin and the originators of these celebrated means of communication, see *Jefferson's Memoirs and Corresp.*, vol. i. pp. 5, 100, &c.; and the *North American Review for July* 1852.

† Holmes's American Annals, vol. ii. p. 246.

‡ Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. pp. 264, 311.

§ Gordon's Hist. of American Independence, vol. i. p. 242.

resources of the American people. "The King," said Otis in the Assembly of Massachusetts, "appoints none but boys for his Ministers. They have no education but travelling through France, from whence they return full of the slavish principles of that country. They know nothing of business when they come into their offices, and do not stay long enough in them to acquire that little knowledge which is gained by experience; so that all business is really done by the clerks."* With far greater discrimination, the French Minister, the Duke de Choiseul, foresaw all the consequences of the blunders committed by the British Government. As early as the month of August, 1767, we find him writing to M. Durand, the French Minister in London, —"Let England but attempt to establish taxes in her colonies, and those countries, greater than England in extent, and perhaps becoming more populous—having fisheries, forests, shipping, corn, iron, and the like—will easily and fearlessly separate themselves from the mother-country." † De Choiseul, burning to avenge the losses and disgraces which Great Britain had inflicted upon France during the late war, not only watched with the deepest interest the progress of events across the Atlantic, but is said to have diligently pored over the contents of the American newspapers; forming his opinions, and drawing his conclusions, from the resolutions passed in their Assemblies; from the instructions issued to the different townships, and even consulting the sermons of the Puritan clergy.‡ Actuated by the same eager desire to furnish himself with the best information, he despatched to England for that purpose his confidential friend, the Count du Châtelet, son of the celebrated Marchioness du Châtelet, the attached friend of Voltaire.§ The result of

* Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. iii. p. 182.

† *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 106. ‡ *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 200.

§ The Count du Châtelet figures as a brave man, and an enlightened statesman. While advocating the policy of establishing a republic in America, he little imagined

Du Châtelet's despatches was to leave little or no doubt upon his mind but that Great Britain, by her unwise and irritating policy, was rapidly hurrying on the Independence of her Colonies. "The ties that bind America to England," writes Du Châtelet to him in March, "are three-fourths broken. It must soon throw off the yoke. To make themselves independent, the inhabitants want nothing but arms, courage, and a chief. If they had among them a genius equal to Cromwell, this republic would be more easy to establish than the one of which that Usurper was the head. Perhaps this man exists. Perhaps nothing is wanting but happy circumstances to place him upon a great theatre." Du Châtelet's surmise, that "some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood" might possibly be already in existence, was not an idle one. Even now, in his picturesque retreat on the banks of the Potomac, the immortal Washington was brooding over the wrongs of his country, and discussing the probability of her being ere long plunged in civil war. "Whenever my country," he said, "calls upon me, I shall be ready to shoulder my musket."*

Another step taken by the Duke de Choiseul was to send French agents in disguise through the American States, for the double purpose of gleaning information and fomenting discontent. Of these persons, the most notable was De Kalb, a military officer of valour and enterprise, as well as a devoted partisan of France. His reports probably disappointed De Choiseul. During his progresses, though he listened to many complaints against, and discovered much jealousy of, the British Government, he was surprised at finding, interwoven with

that he was paving the way for a revolution and a reign of terror in his own country, of which he himself was destined to be one of the earliest victims. After an ineffectual attempt to commit suicide, he perished by the guillotine on the 13th of December 1793. His beautiful and indolent wife, for whom De Choiseul is known to have entertained a passion, followed him shortly afterwards to the scaffold.

* Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. iii. pp. 156, 157.

the dissatisfaction of the people, an ardent and deep-rooted affection for the British nation. What surprised him much more, was the infatuation of the British Legislature in doing all they could to obliterate that affection. He himself often complained that his mission was an eminently unsuccessful one. "There is," he writes, "a hundred times more enthusiasm for the American Revolution in any of our coffee-houses of Paris, than in all the thirteen Provinces of America united." *

In the mean time, in the Province of Massachusetts affairs had been gradually assuming a very alarming aspect. Not many days before the dissolution of the Assembly, a sloop, named the "Liberty," laden with wine from Madeira, arrived
June 10, 1768. in the harbour of Boston. The owner of the vessel was an influential merchant of the place, John Hancock, under whose presidency the second American Congress subsequently assumed for their country the title of THE UNITED COLONIES. As usual on such occasions, a tide-waiter had been placed on board the sloop, for the purpose of preventing the landing of the cargo till the Commissioners of the Customs should have issued the necessary permit. Suddenly, while all was quiet, this person was seized by the captain of the vessel, who, while his crew detained the tide-waiter in one of the cabins, contrived to land a considerable portion of the wine, which, with the object of deceiving the Revenue-officers, he replaced with oil obtained from the shore. Under these circumstances, the Commissioners of the Customs not only took possession of the ship in the name of the King, but greatly enraged the people of Boston by causing her to be towed under the guns of the "Romney," man-of-war, which happened to be lying in the harbour. A formidable popular insurrection was the consequence. The Custom House officers were pelted and beat by the populace. The Collector's boat was carried off and burned before Hancock's

* Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. pp. 259, 260.

residence. The houses of the Commissioners were attacked and they themselves compelled to seek refuge, first of all on board the "Romney," and afterwards in the fortress of Castle William, situated on an island at the mouth of the harbour. To Admiral Hood, the Naval Commander in Chief on the Coast of America, we find the Commissioners writing from Castle William on the 15th of June—"The ferment amongst the people has greatly increased since the 10th instant, and we are persuaded that their leaders will urge them to the most violent measures, even to open revolt; for one of their demagogues, in a town meeting yesterday, said if they were called on to defend their liberties and privileges, he hoped and believed they would one and all resist, even unto blood. What steps the Governor and his Council may take, we cannot tell, but having applied to them, we have not received any assurances of protection; and we are persuaded the Governor will not apply for troops without the advice of his Council, which measure we do not imagine they will recommend." The Commissioners proved to be correct in their conjectures. "Governor Bernard," writes Admiral Hood, "has pressed his Council to advise him to demand troops. All but *three* opposed the measure, so that his Excellency is now left to act upon his own judgment. Colonel Dalrymple holds two Regiments in constant readiness to embark." *

The affair of the "Liberty" proved to be a most untoward event. Forthwith Governor Bernard wrote to Lord Hillsborough, that the revenue laws in Massachusetts needed the support of a considerable military force, and Hillsborough, only too ready to listen to the suggestion, recommended its adoption to his colleagues. Already, in fact, orders had been despatched from Whitehall, for four ships of war and two regiments to proceed from Halifax to

* Admiralty Records, MS.

Boston. A greater mistake it was scarcely possible to have made. However reprehensible might have been the conduct of the people of Boston, Ministers, while there was yet time, should have done their best, by the adoption of a conciliatory policy, to repair the blunders and mischiefs of which they and their predecessors were the authors. Instead, however, of listening to reason and justice, they adopted the very measure which was most calculated, not only to drive the people of Massachusetts to the verge of desperation, but to exasperate the entire population of America. Great indeed was the rage and grief of the inhabitants of Boston, on learning that not only was Castle William to be immediately put into a state of repair, but that a large military force, escorted by a squadron of vessels of war, was on its way to occupy their noble city, and to dragoon them out of the liberties for which their ancestors had paid so dear. In vain had Franklin forewarned the British Government that, in the event of their despatching troops to America, "they would not *find*, but would easily *create* a rebellion." *

It was to no purpose that the citizens implored the Governor to convene an Assembly. The late Assembly, he answered, "had been dissolved by the King's commands, and, without instructions from home, it was not in his power to convene a new one." When this reply was announced to the principal inhabitants of the Province, who were awaiting the Governor's decision in solemn conclave, it was received by them with a burst of irrepressible indignation. "Alas!" writes Thomas Hollis, the philanthropist, on the 24th of July, "that matters should seem tending to extremities between Britain and her North American Colonies, and that the people of Boston, the most sensible, worthy, of them all, and best-affectioned to Revolution principles, and the settlement in the House of Hanover,

* Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. p. 299.

should now prove most uneasy and disgusted!" And again, on the 27th of the same month, Hollis writes to a friend—"The people of Boston and of Massachusetts Bay are, I suppose, take them as a body, the soberest, most knowing, virtuous people, at this time upon earth. All of them hold Revolution principles, and were to a man, till disgusted by the Stamp Act, the staunchest friends to the House of Hanover."*

From this time, the people of Boston set themselves heartily to work to devise and carry out the most energetic measures for the preservation of their liberties. The different towns of Massachusetts were urgently and eloquently invited to send representatives to a general Convention. Language of the most exciting and inflammatory character was everywhere vented against tyranny and oppression. By their laws, they said, no money could be levied, nor a standing army kept in the province, except by their own consent. On the plea of the probability of a war between England and France, it was voted that every inhabitant of Massachusetts should provide himself with arms and ammunition. "There *are* the arms," exclaimed Otis, pointing to the chests in which the arms belonging to the town were kept. "When an attempt is made against your liberties, they will be delivered." Lastly, in imitation of the example of their Puritan forefathers, it was voted that a day should be set apart, to be devoted to humiliation, fasting, and prayer.

The scene of this, and of many other memorable passages associated with the birth of the great Republic, was the celebrated Faneuil Hall, the Town Hall of Boston, now affectionately designated by the modern American the "Cradle of Liberty."

Outside the walls of Faneuil Hall, Samuel Adams † and

* Archdeacon Blackburne's Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, p. 407.

† This illustrious patriot—distinguished alike for his eloquence, his literary abilities, his integrity, his disinterestedness, his fearlessness, his domestic virtues and charming social qualities—was born at Boston, September 27, 1722, and died

James Otis, *—who, more than any other two men, may be said to have been the founders of the American Republic—seized every opportunity of exciting a spirit of resistance in the minds of their fellow-countrymen. "We will submit to no tax;" said Adams, "neither will we become slaves. Before the King and Parliament shall impose upon us, or settle Crown officers independent of the Colonial Legislature, we will take up arms and shed the last drop of our blood. Was it reverence for Kings which brought the ancestors of New England to America? They fled from Kings and Bishops, and looked up to the King of Kings."†

Of the ninety-six towns and eight districts which had been invited to send representatives to the proposed Convention at Boston, Hatfield alone declined to comply with the requisition. The remainder met on the appointed
Sep. 22, 1768. day in Faneuil Hall, where they united in drawing up a petition, in which, in very temperate language, they recapi-

October 2, 1803, in the eighty-second year of his age. Governor Hutchinson, in a letter to Lord Dartmouth, dated October 9, 1773, mentions Samuel Adams as "the first person who openly, and in any public Assembly," declared himself in favour of "total" Independence. *Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution*, vol. iii. p. 519.

* James Otis was also a native of Massachusetts, in which Province he was born at Barnstaple, February 25, 1725. This learned and courageous statesman, and fiery orator, may be regarded as the first and foremost of the champions of American freedom. So early as the year 1761 he had distinguished himself in defending the rights of his native colony; especially by his eloquent opposition to the "Writs of Assistance" in the State House of Boston, a service which, in the opinion of John Adams, laid the foundation of American Independence. "Otis," he writes, "was a flame of fire. With a promptitude of classical allusions, a depth of research, a rapid summary of historical events and dates, a profusion of legal authorities, a prophetic glance of his eyes into futurity, and a rapid torrent of impetuous eloquence, he hurried away all before him. American Independence was then and there born. The seeds of patriots and heroes, to defend the *non sine Diis animosus infans*, to defend the vigorous youth, were then and there sown. Every man of an immense crowded audience appeared to me to go away as I did, ready to take Arms against Writs of Assistance. Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain. Then and there the child Independence was born." *Tudor's Life of James Otis*, pp. 60, 61. Otis was struck dead by lightning, while leaning on his walking-cane at the door of a friend at Andover, Massachusetts, May 23, 1783.

† Bancroft's History of the American Revolution, vol. iii. pp. 213, 215.

tulated their grievances, disclaimed all legislative authority, declared their aversion to popular tumults, and their warm devotion to the King, at the same time earnestly entreating the Governor to revoke his former decision, and convene the Assembly of the Province. The Governor, however, not only declined to receive the Members who brought up the petition, but refused even to attach his signature to the document which contained his refusal. On the following day, a further attempt was made to induce him to listen to their grievances, but with the same ill-success, and accordingly, contenting themselves with drawing up a respectful petition to the King, and with passing a Resolution expressive of their earnest desire to preserve peace and order, the Convention declared itself dissolved, and its members, with wounded and sorrowful hearts, dispersed to their several homes.

It was on the same day which terminated the sittings of the Convention, that the inhabitants of Boston beheld with consternation the disheartening sight of a British squadron sailing into their noble harbour, and taking up its position with its cannon pointed menacingly towards the town. The naval force consisted of eight ships of war. The military force which it escorted was composed of two regiments, of a detachment of a third, and of a train of artillery. The memorable landing of the troops took place on the first of October. As they marched through the crowded streets with their bayonets fixed, their drums beating, their fifes playing, and their colours flying, the inhabitants of Boston regarded the novel spectacle in no other light than as an insolent display of power, and as an arbitrary invasion of their liberties and rights. With the soldiers individually, however, they had no cause of quarrel, and consequently they received them with a kindness and an hospitality which were rendered interesting by subsequent unhappy events. According to an accomplished

Englishman, General Wentworth,* who arrived soon afterwards on the spot—"The troops landed under very strict discipline, and the officers conducted themselves with discreet firmness and moderation. Whence it happened that no mischief ensued. On the contrary, at night, the soldiers being under arms, waiting a determination for barracks, had victuals and drink brought plentifully and given them by the inhabitants, very differently from any hatred to them. The next day, the soldiers were in every street, saying aloud—'God preserve the Commissioners of Customs, who have brought us into such a blessed country!'" †

It was insisted upon by the Americans, and apparently on good grounds, that the quartering of a military force at Boston was not only an arbitrary and irritating measure, but that it was neither rendered necessary by the state of affairs in the surrounding Province, nor had the recent riots been of so serious a character as to justify the proceeding. "The King," said Samuel Adams, "has no right to send troops here to invade the country. They come as foreign enemies." What blame in fact there was, lay chiefly in the Government and its servants. When Governor Wentworth quitted Boston, it was with the full conviction that "more obstructions had arisen in the country from the servants of Government," than from any other cause. "The
Nov. 13. officers," he writes, "appeared not a little surprised to find

* John Wentworth, Esq., Lieutenant Governor of New Hampshire. His son, Sir John Wentworth, was created a Baronet, May 16, 1795.

† Letter from Governor Wentworth to the Marquis of Rockingham, dated Nov. 13, 1768, Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 88. "It was with no small indignation," according to an American writer of that day, "that the people beheld the Representatives' Chamber, Court house, and Faneuil Hall—seats of freedom and justice—occupied by troops, and guards placed at the doors, and the Council passing through the guards in going to their own Chamber. They resented also the Common being covered with tents and alive with soldiers; their marchings and counter-marchings to relieve the guards; the town's being a perfect garrison, and the inhabitants being challenged by the sentinels as they passed and repassed. Persons, devoutly inclined, complained much of being disturbed at public worship on the Sabbaths with drums beating and fifes playing, to which they had never been accustomed in the Massachusetts." *Gordon's Hist. of American Independence*, vol. i. p. 248.

the town quiet and orderly to a remarkable degree. I am at a loss to inform your Lordship of any real use or necessity for this armament. It cannot be advantageous to the revenue, which will not suffice to pay half the expense. If it is intended to secure the dependence of the Colonies, I fear it will exceedingly operate the other way."*

Great indeed had been the infatuation of the Ministers of George the Third, when they arrived at the conclusion that the people of Massachusetts were to be awed into submission by the sight of a British squadron sailing into their waters, or of three or four British regiments landing upon their shores. Far more sagacious were the views which the two French Ministers, De Choiseul and Du Châtelet, continued to entertain. The cause of Massachusetts, they perceived, must sooner or later become the common cause of America. Let the two countries, they said, severally appeal to the God of Battles, and what chance had Great Britain of subduing a vast continent inhabited by a brave, enthusiastic, and united people? Great Britain, they argued, had only ten thousand soldiers in America, whereas the American militia numbered four hundred thousand men. Moreover the American people, as Du Châtelet pointed out, were actuated by the same love of freedom and spirit of republicanism which had animated their forefathers. They had also become conscious of their own resources and strength. "Of what avail," asked Du Châtelet of De Choiseul, "will an army be in so vast a country? The Americans have made these reflections, and they will not give way." †

In the mean time, public feeling in England was unhappily running high against the people of Massachusetts, not only in Ministerial and Tory circles, but throughout the country. Accordingly, so soon as Parliament assembled, Nov. 8.

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 89.

† Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. iii. pp. 200, 261.

not only were votes of censure passed on the conduct of the American people, but addresses were presented to the King, assuring him of the determination of his faithful Lords and Commons to support him in carrying out such measures as would in future maintain the authority of the civil magistrates in the Colonies, and preclude a repetition of popular outrages.* Of the measures subsequently submitted to Parliament, the first—as odious an one as can well be imagined—was proposed and carried by the Duke of Bedford. On the ground that the Boston juries were likely to be biassed by national prejudices when trying political offences, an obsolete statute of the reign of Henry the Eighth † was raked up, which allowed offenders to be brought over from beyond the seas, and tried by special commission in England. That such a proposition should have created a storm of indignation, not only in the province of Massachusetts but throughout America, only the most short-sighted persons could have failed to foresee. Even in England it excited resentment and horror. Among those who, on this side of the Atlantic, raised their voices the loudest and most eloquently against the atrocious enactment was Constantine Phipps, Member of Parliament for Newark.‡ The statute, he said, though passed in the reign of a tyrant, was, as regarded the specific purpose for which it was enacted, an unexceptionable one. It had been passed in order to extend the inestimable advantages of a trial by jury to the transmarine subjects of Henry the Eighth residing at Boulogne and at other parts; whereas, if applied to America, it would most tyrannically deprive

* Annual Register for 1768, pp. 274, 275.

† 35th Henry 8, c. 2: *Statutes at Large*, vol. ii. p. 361. Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. col. 476, *note*.

‡ A Captain in the Royal Navy; afterwards second Baron Mulgrave. He held, at different times, the appointments of Joint Paymaster of the Forces, a Lord of Trade, and a Commissioner of the East India Board. Lord Mulgrave died on the 10th of October 1792.

the people of that country of those very advantages, which it had been expressly framed to confer. For instance, supposing one of the Boston rioters was to be brought over to England for trial, what possible advantage would accrue to him by being able to challenge jurors of whose characters and connexions he was most profoundly ignorant? What knowledge could he possibly possess to guide him in the selection of counsel; and, again, by what process, or by means of what funds, was he to enforce the appearance of witnesses from the other side of the Atlantic? But, added the speaker, supposing that, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, he should be acquitted, what reparation could be made to an ingenuous mind for having been arraigned on so foul an imputation as disloyalty? "What reparation," he asked, "can be made to men dragged from the endearments of domestic life; brought from the land of liberty flowing with milk and honey, to drink at the bitter fountain of oppression? Will they return less possessed of the confidence of their fellow-subjects, and less inclined to abuse it? Will they return less convinced of the inconveniences of a dependent state, or less solicitous to shake off the yoke, from this new outrage?" *

Burke addressed the House of Commons in the same strain. Jan. 26, 1769. "If your remedy," he said, "is such as is not likely to appease the Americans, but to exasperate them, you fire a cannon upon your enemy which will recoil upon yourselves. And why? Because you cannot trust a jury of that country? —Sir, that word must convey horror to every feeling mind. If you have not a party among two millions of people, you must either change your plan of government, or renounce your colonies for ever." † Still more eloquent was the language of Colonel Barré. During the passing of Gren-

* Sir H. Cavendish's Debates, vol. i. p. 210.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 199.

ville's famous Stamp Act, as he reminded the House, he had predicted the troubles which had since ensued. He now solemnly warned the same Assembly that they were preparing the way for far more serious and alarming commotions. The people of America, he said, looked to them to find a remedy for their wrongs, and if that remedy was withheld, desperation might follow. The day might arrive when the vast Continent would arise in arms, and America be lost to them for ever. "Consider well," he exclaimed, addressing himself to the Ministerial Bench, "what you are doing! Why will you deceive yourselves and us? You know that it is not this place, nor that place, that disputes your right, but every part. They tell you with one voice from one part of the Continent to the other that you have no right to tax America."

At this period, one of the most enlightened, experienced, and best informed statesmen, on all subjects connected with America, was Thomas Pownall, Member of Parliament for Tregony, more familiarly known in his day as Governor Pownall.* Session after session, the warning voice of this sagacious person was raised in deprecation of the present fatal policy of the Government, but to little purpose. The course, he told them, which they were pursuing would inevitably convert loyal subjects into political fanatics, and wealthy merchants and sturdy husbandmen into desperate rebels. The people of America, he said, were inspired by the same spirit of freedom which had animated their Puritan forefathers, that same indomitable spirit which had induced the founders of American Liberty to banish themselves from all that was near and dear to them in their native land,

* This meritorious public servant had successively held the appointments of Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey, Governor of Massachusetts, and Governor of South Carolina. He was the author of several works, chiefly of an antiquarian character, a list of which may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. lxxv. p. 288. His death took place at Bath, February 25, 1805, either in his eighty-fourth or eighty-fifth year. There is an account of him in *Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century*, vol. viii. pp. 61—4.

and, in exchange for its comforts, its venerable associations, its civilisation, its security, and its endearments, to encounter the hardships and the perils of the wilderness, and the neighbourhood of the treacherous and merciless savage. Not only, proceeded the prophetic though disregarded orator, are the descendants of those men actuated by the same yearning after freedom and the same loathing for oppression, but the sacrifices which they may be required to make, and the difficulties with which they might have to contend, would be far less severe than those over which their ancestors had achieved their memorable triumph. They had not, he said, a country to leave, but a country to defend. They had not to forsake their friends and relations, but to unite with and to stand by them in one common union. "The only sacrifice," he continued, "they have to make is that of a few follies and a few luxuries. Necessity is not the ground of their commerce with you. It is merely the affectation of your modes and customs; the love for home, as they call England, that makes them like everything that comes from thence. But passion may be conquered by passion. They will abominate, as sincerely as they now love you; and if they do, they have within themselves everything requisite to the food, raiment, or the dwelling of mankind, and have no need of your commerce." * But the orator might just as profitably have preached to the winds. As for himself, was the injudicious exclamation of Lord North, he would never yield "till he had seen America at his feet." †

Although the Session closed without any attempt having been made to conciliate the people of America, there was nevertheless one at least of the Ministers, the Duke of Grafton, who had begun to perceive how suicidal was the policy which he and his colleagues had been pursuing towards the Colonists. Accordingly, at a Cabinet Council which was held on the 1st of May, he proposed

* Cavendish's Debates, vol. i. p. 221. † *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 206.

to them that, on the re-assembling of Parliament, they should bring in a Bill for the entire repeal of the obnoxious import-duties. Unfortunately, however, the concession was considered to be too humiliating a one, and consequently, on Lord North proposing that the duty on tea should still be retained, chiefly as an assertion of right on the part of the mother-country, the Duke of Grafton found himself in a minority by a casting vote of one. "But for that unhappy event," he writes, "I think the separation from America might have been avoided."* "We can grant nothing to the Americans," were the words of the wrongheaded Hillsborough, "except what they may ask with a halter round their necks." †

* MS. Memoirs, quoted in *Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 365.

† Du Châtelet to De Choiseul May 12, 1769; Bancroft's History of the American Revolution, vol. iii. pp. 307—8.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Recall of Governor Bernard—Conflict in Boston, with loss of life—Repeal of Colonial Import Duties, except on Tea—Publication of Secret Correspondence of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts with friends of Ministers in England—Proceedings against Franklin thereon—Scene before the Privy Council—Tax on Tea entering the ports of the American Provinces—The first cargoes thrown into Boston harbour—Boston Port Bill and Massachusetts Government Bill passed through Parliament.

THE intention of Government, to propose in the next Session of Parliament a repeal of the duties on glass, paper, and colours, was communicated by Lord Hillsborough, in a rude and ill-judged circular letter, to the Governors of the different American Colonies. For several reasons the proposed concessions afforded little satisfaction on the other side of the Atlantic. "We should be glad," are the words of the people of Massachusetts in their 'Appeal to the World,' "that the ancient and happy union between Great Britain and this country might be restored. The taking off the duties on paper, glass and painters' colours, upon commercial principles only, will not give satisfaction. Discontent runs through the continent upon much higher principles. Our rights are invaded by the Revenue Acts; therefore until they are ALL repealed, and the troops recalled, the cause of our just complaints cannot be removed."* Much greater was the satisfaction afforded to the Colonists by the recall of Governor Bernard. The day on which he quitted Boston for Europe was kept as a day of ovation. The bells of the city were rung; cannon were fired; flags waved from the tree of Liberty, and at night a bonfire blazed on Fort Hill. "He was to have sent

July 31, 1769.

* Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. iii. p. 345.

home to England whom he pleased," said the people of Boston; "but he himself is the rogue to go first."* Some person having put the question to Bernard, whether he had not been afraid to walk abroad among a people by whom he was so much detested—"No," was his reply, "they are not a bloodthirsty people."† Thomas Hutchinson, a native of New England, was appointed Governor of Massachusetts in Bernard's room.

1770. It was on the 5th of March, that Lord North, now First Minister of the Crown, moved in the House of Commons for a repeal of the duties on all articles imported into America with the single exception of tea. The bad policy of retaining this special impost was recognised in England as well as in America. According to Franklin, it not only had the effect of depriving of their accustomed luxury a million of people in America, who had been in the habit of drinking tea twice a-day, but the revenue derived from it amounted to less than three hundred pounds. "And all this," as Alderman Beckford pertinently observed, "with a great army to collect it!" Under these circumstances, Governor Pownall, in a speech full of wise warnings and admonitions, moved as an amendment to the Premier's motion, that the repeal should extend to *all* duties, but unhappily, though very ably supported by Sir William Meredith and Colonel Barré, Government succeeded in defeating him by a majority of two hundred and four against one hundred and forty-two.‡

* Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. iii. pp. 321—2.

† Gordon's Hist. of American Independence, vol. i. p. 272. According to a contemporary letter, dated London, June 5, 1770—"The people of England now curse Governor Bernard as bitterly as those of America. Bernard was drove out of the Smyrna Coffee House, not many days since, by General Oglethorpe, who told him that he was a dirty factious scoundrel and smelled cursed strong of the hangman; that he had better leave the room, as unworthy to mix with gentlemen of character, but that he would give him the satisfaction of following him to the door had he anything to reply. The Governor left the house like a guilty coward." *Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry*, p. 81, *note*, 3rd Edition.

‡ Parliamentary History, vol. xvi. col. 852, &c. Cavendish's Debates, vol. i. pp. 483, &c.

In the mean time, a bitter feeling of hostility had grown up between the inhabitants of Boston and the British soldiers quartered in their town. The military, it is said, were in the habit of treating the townspeople with contempt, which the latter resented by insulting the military. Thus was Boston ripe for a riot when on the 5th of March, the same day on which Lord North was moving his Repeal-measure in the British Parliament, a sanguinary collision unhappily took place between the red-coats and the citizens. In consequence, it seems, of some of the soldiers having, a few days previously, been worsted in a street broil, either they, or their comrades, had sworn to seize the first opportunity of avenging themselves on the townspeople. Accordingly, on the night of the 5th, parties of soldiers are said to have suddenly made their appearance; threatening, insulting, and even, if the American accounts be correct, striking with their cudgels, persons whom they met in the streets. No time was lost by the lower class of citizens in opposing force to force, and accordingly a fierce conflict seemed on the point of commencing, when, in consequence of a rumour having reached the commanding officer, Captain Preston, that the Treasury chest was threatened with attack, he made his appearance on the ground with the guard of the night, consisting of a non-commissioned officer and twelve private soldiers. In regard to the unfortunate incidents which rapidly followed, each party, as is usual on such occasions, endeavoured to throw the blame upon the other. According to the American accounts, the soldiers pushed their way insolently and violently through the crowd, sneering at and cursing the people as they passed along; while, on the other hand, the British versions of the affair not only represent the behaviour of the military as having been singularly forbearing, but insist that Captain Preston did his utmost to conciliate the Americans, by repeatedly assuring them that he came there with no hostile

intentions. Whichever party, however, may have been the most to blame, it seems to be certain that, so soon as the soldiers were drawn up in line, all the blame of provocation lay with the civilians, who not only increased the irritation of the adverse party by calling them "bloody backs"* and "lobster scoundrels" but even went so far as to endeavour to strike their muskets from their hands. Still the men kept their tempers, till one of them, having been struck with a stick, lifted his piece and fired. Almost at the same moment, the word "fire" was given, but from whose lips it proceeded has never, we believe, been proved. The effect, however, was instantaneous. A murderous volley sent the rabble flying in all directions; leaving, weltering in their blood on the snow, and in the brilliant moonlight, no fewer than three of their companions dead, and eight wounded, of whom two afterwards died of the injuries which they had received.

Considering how exasperated the people of Massachusetts already were against the British Government, it was perhaps no more than was to be expected that they should seek to convert the late catastrophe into political account, by employing it to enlist on their behalf the sympathies of their fellow-countrymen. Accordingly, not only was it represented as an act of cold-blooded butchery,† but, for many years to come, the anniversary of the "Boston Massacre" was kept in the Province of Massachusetts as a day for national lamentation and sorrow. Nevertheless Captain Preston received a fair trial, thus giving the lie to the assertions of the British Ministers that it was not in the nature of a Boston Jury to judge with impartiality. The Jury which tried him re-

* This expression, having reference to the custom of flogging in the British Army, was probably a very galling one to the soldiers.

† See letter, in March 1770, from the Council of Massachusetts to the Agent of that Province in England, William Bollan, Esq.: *Massachusetts State Papers*, pp. 433—5, Boston, 1818.

turned a verdict of Not Guilty. Only two of the soldiers were convicted of Manslaughter, having been proved to have discharged their muskets before the word "fire" had been given.

According to the most recent historian of America—"At the cry of innocent blood shed by the soldiery the Continent heaved like a troubled ocean."* Undoubtedly the news of the catastrophe, which had taken place in Massachusetts, excited a vast amount of indignation in the other Provinces, yet it was not so excessive as to render them altogether ungrateful for the Repeal of the Import Duties. Over the American mind in general that act of grace, insufficient though it was, certainly produced a tranquillizing effect. So irksome, indeed, had become the isolating policy by which the Colonists had bound themselves to abstain from the consumption of articles of British manufacture, that the majority were only too glad to be afforded an honourable opportunity of recalling their pledges. Accordingly, contenting themselves with self-denial only in the instance of one single article, tea, they seceded, with the exception of Massachusetts, from the non-importation confederacy, and resumed their former commercial relations with the mother-country.

Massachusetts, indeed, remained sullen and implacable. Loudly and bitterly the people of Boston continued to proclaim their grievances to the world. Great Britain, they said, had asserted her absolute power over their liberties and fortunes. She had even claimed a right to saddle them with a Bishop and Episcopal Courts.† She

* Bancroft's History of the American Revolution, vol. iii. p. 386.

† For some time past, as it would seem, the Bench of Bishops in England had been perseveringly endeavouring to prevail upon the British Government to establish an episcopal hierarchy in America. According to one of her historians—"These applications, of which intelligence was procured by the provincial Agents, excited the general disgust of the Americans, who beheld in the project only a measure instrumental to the aggrandizement of British Prerogative, and the multiplication of royal functionaries whose emoluments were to be derived from the American civil list." *Grahame's Hist. of the United States*, vol. iv. p. 305.

had not only attempted to extort a revenue from them without their consent, but she had also appointed persons to collect that revenue, of whose functions and authority there was no recognition in their charter, and whose powers therefore were unconstitutional. A most tyrannical law, they said, had been passed, which rendered them liable at any moment to be seized and sent to Great Britain for trial. Neither, in their own country, were they any longer secure of that inestimable privilege, a fair and impartial trial. Out of the hateful tribute, which it was attempted to wring from them, the British Ministry had expressed their intention of paying the salaries of the Judges, instead of, as heretofore, permitting them to be defrayed by the free vote and annual grant of their own Assembly. Great Britain, said the Colonists, having failed in her attempt to dragoon them out of their liberties, was now intent upon corrupting the source of justice. Even the Judges, whose decisions affected their lives and liberties, would henceforth be dependent on the Crown.

1773. Such were among the topics, which were still occasionally agitating the minds of the people of America, when the famous affront, offered in the Council Chamber of the King of England, to their illustrious fellow-countryman, Benjamin Franklin, unhappily added fresh fuel to the flame. The circumstances of that indignity are well known. It had been confidentially communicated to Franklin, by one whom he styles "a gentleman of character and distinction," that not only had a clandestine and traitorous correspondence been carried on for some years by certain influential inhabitants of Massachusetts with the friends of Ministers in England, but that many of those harsh and arbitrary measures, of which the people of Boston so bitterly complained, had in fact been suggested by native Americans. Franklin, startled and incredulous, desired to see the documents which were said

to corroborate so great a villany; a request which was readily complied with. They consisted of private letters addressed by Thomas Hutchinson the Governor, and by his brother-in-law Andrew Oliver, the Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, to Thomas Whately, formerly private Secretary to George Grenville, when Prime Minister, and afterwards Under Secretary of State to the Earl of Suffolk. These letters, it is true, had not been written till after Whately had quitted office; but as they were indisputably intended to be shown to Grenville and to other persons of political influence in England, the fact would seem to be an unimportant one. Franklin read the papers with an avidity, and with an indignation, which may be readily imagined. In those documents, among other "severe and destructive measures," was advocated—not by the oppressors of America, but by two of her own sons—the arbitrary procedure of quartering British troops in Boston and enforcing the hateful Revenue laws at the point of the bayonet. At Franklin's earnest solicitation, and on his solemn promise of secrecy, permission was given him to forward these obnoxious documents to the Committee of Correspondence at Boston; it being distinctly guaranteed by him that the source from whence he had received the letters should never be divulged; that they should be shown only to a few influential persons in the Colonies; that copies should on no account be taken of them, and lastly that they should be returned in due time to their mysterious owner.* Yet, notwithstanding these promises and precautions, no long time was suffered to elapse before the letters were formally laid before the Assembly of Massachusetts, and, as a certain consequence, appeared in print. The indignation which their publication excited in America was equalled only by the confusion of the two individuals who had written them. "Cool, thinking, deliberate villains!"

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. pp. 366—8. Third Edition.

said Samuel Adams of Hutchinson and Oliver—"Malicious and vindictive as well as ambitious and avaricious!"—"Bone of our bone!" said the Assembly of Massachusetts, "Flesh of our flesh! born and educated among us, what punishment would be too severe for them?" "We are commanded to forgive our enemies—" became a current saying in America—"but we are nowhere enjoined to pardon our friends." On this side of the Atlantic, men judged differently of Hutchinson's conduct. On the same day—the 4th of July 1776—on which the American Congress announced to the world the Independence of their country, and the dismemberment of the British Empire, the University of Oxford honoured him with the dignity of Master of Arts. To borrow Franklin's words—they were at least Masters of the "art of reducing a great empire to a small one." *

In England, the publication of Hutchinson's and Oliver's letters created almost as great a sensation as in America. That they had been obtained possession of by clandestine, if not dishonourable means, was sufficiently manifest. Who, then, it was eagerly asked, was the individual who had been base enough to publish letters at once so confidential, and so seriously perilling the interests of others? Eventually suspicion fell on a Mr. John Temple, an active partisan in the cause of American freedom, and a friend of the Whately family. Thomas Whately, to whom the letters were addressed, was no more. His papers had come into the possession of his brother and executor, William Whately, who had more than once trusted Temple with files of his brother's correspondence. Undoubtedly these were suspicious circumstances; yet Temple not only strenuously and haughtily repudiated the charge, but in consequence of

* Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. p. 337, *note*. The same honour, on the same occasion, was conferred upon Peter Oliver, late Chief Justice of Massachusetts, brother to Andrew Oliver. *Annual Register for* 1776, *p.* 159.

certain strictures of William Whately, which appeared in the newspapers, challenged him to single combat. A duel was the result, in which Whately was wounded; the approach of strangers happily averting the possible occurrence of a more disastrous issue.*

Hitherto, notwithstanding the intimacy which was known to exist between Franklin and Temple, no suspicion had rested upon the former. No sooner, however, was it intimated to Franklin that a second duel was likely to take place between William Whately and Temple, than foreseeing the probability of having the blood of one, or perhaps of both of them, upon his head, he at once took upon himself the whole odium and responsibility of the transaction. "I alone," he said, "am the person who obtained and transmitted to Boston the letters in question."† At once a furious storm of public indignation was hurled at the illustrious American. It became the *ton*, to use his own words, to abuse him in "every company and in every newspaper." According to his enemies, not only was he guilty of the offence of publishing private letters—an act, it was said, which no

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 393, vol. ii. p. 407, Appendix. Third edition. A curious but questionable account, of the manner in which Franklin became possessed of the momentous letters referred to, is to be found in a pamphlet entitled "*A Biographical Memoir of Hugh Williamson, M.D., &c. By David Hosack, M.D., &c.*" New York, 1820. "He [Dr. Williamson] had learned that Governor Hutchinson's letters were deposited in an office different from that in which they ought regularly to have been placed; and having understood that there was little exactness in the transaction of the business of that office (it is believed it was the office of a particular department of the Treasury), he immediately repaired to it, and addressed himself to the chief clerk, not finding the principal within. Assuming the demeanour of official importance, he peremptorily stated that he had come for the last letters that had been received from Governor Hutchinson and Mr. Oliver, noticing the office in which they ought regularly to have been placed. Without a question being asked, the letters were delivered. The clerk, doubtless, supposed him to be an authorised person from some other public office. Dr. Williamson immediately carried them to Dr. Franklin, and the next day left London for Holland."——"I received this important fact," continues Dr. Hosack, "from a gentleman of high respectability, now living, with whom, as the companion and friend of his early days, Dr. Williamson had entrusted the secret." In refutation, however, of these circumstantial particulars, see *Sparks's Edition of Franklin's Works*, vol. iv. p. 441. Boston, 1840.

† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. p. 395, Appendix. Third Edition.

honourable man would commit, and which no sophistries could justify—but, inasmuch as the letters had indisputably been stolen from their rightful owner, he had not only committed a mean action, but was also an accomplice in theft. Certainly, if tried in a Court of Honour, Franklin might have found it difficult to obtain a verdict of acquittal. Yet his conduct has been frequently and warmly defended. It has been argued, and not without reason, that, when he acted as he did, it was not as a private individual, but in his public capacity as an Agent for the American Colonies; that, while so employed, it was his bounden duty to let pass no opportunity of furnishing his clients with the exactest information which he could obtain; that here was a case in which it was of the most vital importance to them to be put upon their guard against their secret enemies and maligners; and lastly that, by disclosing to them the names of the real authors of their wrongs, there was the hope of diverting the resentment of the people of America from the Government of Great Britain, and thus preparing the way for a happy reconciliation between the two countries. Such, at least, were the arguments used by Franklin in defending his conduct and satisfying his doubts; "and I think," he writes to a friend, "they must have the same effect with you." *

In the mean time, the people of Massachusetts, justly incensed against their Governor and Lieutenant Governor, not only voted them guilty of attempting to establish arbitrary power within their province, and to subvert their ancient constitution, but forwarded to the King, through the Secretary of State, a memorial praying him to dismiss them from their present employment, on account of their being personally obnoxious to themselves, as well as obstacles to the re-establishment of a kindlier understanding between them and their Sovereign. The Memorial was referred by

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 371. Third Edition.

the King to the consideration of his Privy Council, and accordingly, on the 29th of January—the anniversary of the day on which the Puritans of old signed the death-warrant of Charles the First—the hearing took place in the Cockpit at Whitehall, almost opposite to the beautiful Banqueting Hall, from the broken wall of which Charles had stepped upon the scaffold. The anxiety on the part of the public to be present was intense. "The Council," writes Burke, who was there, "was the fullest of any in our memory: thirty-five attended." * While Burke, on his way to Whitehall, was passing up Parliament Street, he accidentally encountered the celebrated Dr. Priestley, whom he good-naturedly engaged to carry with him into the Council Chamber. Dr. Priestley has himself described the difficulties which they met with. "'We shall never get through the crowd,' I said to him. Mr. Burke said,—'Give me your arm;' and locking it fast in his, he soon made his way to the door of the Privy Council. I then said,—'Mr. Burke, you are an excellent leader.' He replied,—'I wish other persons thought so too.'" † 1774.

The interior of the Council Chamber presented a remarkable scene. The tribunal, if not a packed, was at least a prejudiced one. In the midst of a crowded and excited audience sat round the Council-table the Lord President of the Council, the Prime Minister, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the present and the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, the first Lord of the Admiralty, the President of the Board of Trade, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Treasurer of the Navy, the Paymaster General of the Forces, one of the Joint Postmasters General, and other individuals, holding office, including two Lords of the Bedchamber and a junior Lord of the Treasury. So large

* Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. pp. 258, 2nd Edition.

† Letter from Dr. Priestley to the Editor of the Monthly Magazine, dated 10 November 1802: quoted in *Franklin's Life and Writings*, vol. i. pp. 356—7.

an attendance of persons, notoriously opposed to the claims of the people of Massachusetts, augured, of course, no very favourable reception for their memorial. Calm and erect, in a conspicuous part of the room near the fire-place, stood Franklin, the "observed of all observers." Not far from him stood his chief accuser, the Solicitor General, Alexander Wedderburn, whose brilliant eloquence, and withering abuse of Franklin on this occasion, were never forgotten by those who were present. Assuredly Wedderburn, as Counsel for Governors Hutchinson and Oliver, had a right to put as unfavourable a construction as he could on Franklin's conduct in regard to the stolen letters; but, on the other hand, the gross insults which he put upon him, and, in his person, upon the four important Colonies, of which Franklin was the representative, were such as it seems impossible to excuse. Moreover, Wedderburn's address to the Privy Council had all the appearance of being prompted by the bitterest personal aversion. It was the object of the "hoary-headed traitor," he exclaimed, to embroil Great Britain with America. Either Franklin, he argued, had obtained the letters by "fraudulent or corrupt means" or he had "stolen them from the person who stole them." — "I hope, my Lords," he said, "that you will mark and brand the man for the honour of this country, of Europe, and of mankind. Private correspondence has hitherto been held sacred in times of the greatest party-rage, not only in politics but religion." This man, however, he continued, "has forfeited all the respect of societies and men." * In such language as this, did the insolent lawyer speak of the profound philosopher, of the noble-hearted patriot, of the delightful social companion, of the tolerant politician, of the most illustrious, next to Washington, of the founders of the great American Republic, of the "new

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. p. 401, Appendix. Third Edition.

Prometheus" who, in the words of a beautiful modern Latin verse,—

"Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."*

"From Heaven snatched lightning, and from Kings their sceptres."

But, still more reprehensible than the language of Wedderburn, still more calculated to complete the exasperation of the people of America, was the conduct of the members of the Privy Council themselves. Forgetting the solemnity of the occasion which had brought them together, they not only hounded on the King's Solicitor General to fresh vituperations, by greeting him with cries of "Hear him! Hear him!" and other indecent expressions of applause, but several of them, including the President, Earl Gower, were observed to laugh outright. The countenance of the Prime Minister alone is said to have worn an expression of becoming gravity. Thus encouraged, Wedderburn launched forth into still more disgraceful scurrilities. Into what companies, he asked, will Dr. Franklin in future enter with an unembarrassed face? Men will watch him with a jealous eye. They will hide their papers from him, and lock up their *escritoires*. He even went to the cruel length of charging Franklin with having foreknowingly permitted the duel to take place between Temple and Whately. "Here is a man," he exclaimed, "who, with the utmost insensibility of remorse, stands up and avows him-

* The famous inscription on a medal subsequently struck in France in honour of Franklin, when Ambassador from the United States to the Court of Versailles.

"While Franklin's quiet memory climbs to Heaven,
Calming the lightning which he thence hath riven;
Or drawing from the no less kindled earth
Freedom and peace to that which boasts his birth."

Lord Byron; The Age of Bronze.

These passages of course allude to Franklin's discoveries and experiments in electricity.

self the author of all. I can compare him only to Zanga in Dr. Young's 'Revenge,'—

> 'Know then 'twas I—
> I forged the letter, I disposed the picture,
> I hated, I despised, and I destroy.'*

I ask, my Lords, whether the revengeful temper, attributed by poetic fiction only to the bloody African, is not surpassed by the coolness and apathy of this wily American." †

> "While Peers enraptured hail the unmanly wrong
> See Ribaldry, vile prostitute of shame,
> Stretch the bribed hand and prompt the venal tongue,
> To blast the laurels of a FRANKLIN'S fame.
> But will the sage—whose philosophic soul
> Controlled the lightning in its fierce career,
> Heard unappalled the aerial thunders roll,
> And taught the bolts of vengence where to steer—
> Will he—while, echoing to his just renown,
> The voice of kingdoms joins the loud applause—
> Heed the weak malice of a Courtier's frown,
> Or dread the coward insolence of laws?"‡

For a season the high-prerogative party enjoyed their triumph. But the day of retribution was not far off. "I remember"—said Charles Fox, many years afterwards, in the House of Commons—"the prodigious effect produced by that splendid invective. So great was it that when the Privy Council went away they were almost ready to throw up their hats for joy, as if by the vehement and eloquent philippic they had obtained a triumph. Yet we paid a pretty dear price for it." § Franklin listened to that "splendid invective," to all appearance unabashed and unconcerned. "I should think myself," he said to a friend who was standing near him, "meaner than I have been described, if anything coming from such a

* Act 5, Scene 3.

† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. pp. 401, 402.

‡ Extract from a poem, entitled "An Elegy on the Times," printed in the *Massachusetts Spy* newspaper, for September 22, 1774.

§ Fox's Speeches, vol. vi. p. 527.

quarter could vex me."—"He stood," writes another bystander and friend, Dr. Bancroft, "close to the fire-place, on that side which was at the right hand of those who were looking towards the fire; in the front of which, though at some distance, the members of the Privy Council were seated at a table. I obtained a place on the opposite side of the fire-place, a little further from the fire; but Dr. Franklin's face was directed towards me, and I had a full and uninterrupted view of it and his person, during the whole time in which Mr. Wedderburn spoke. The Doctor was dressed in a full dress suit of spotted Manchester velvet, and stood *conspicuously erect*, without the smallest movement of any part of his body. The muscles of his face had been previously composed, so as to afford a placid tranquil expression of countenance, and he did not suffer the slightest alteration of it to appear during the continuance of the speech in which he was so harshly and improperly treated." *

"Sarcastic Sawney, swoll'n with pride and prate,
On silent Franklin poured his venal hate;
The mute philosopher without reply
Withdrew—and gave his country liberty."†

Yet, notwithstanding Franklin's outward placidity of demeanour, there is evidence that he both deeply felt, and highly resented, the gross indignity to which he had been exposed. "It required," writes his friend Burke, "all his philosophy, natural and acquired, to support him against it." ‡ As Franklin, on the breaking up of the Council, passed into an adjoining apartment, in which Wedderburn was standing the cynosure of a circle of admiring and congratulating friends, the significant manner in which the philosopher held out his hand to, and pressed that of, Dr.

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. pp. 357—8.
† Contemporary Epigram, quoted in *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 166.
‡ Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 258. Second Edition.

Priestley, seems to have spoken more eloquently than words could have done the true state of his feelings. Happily in his own conscience he was able to find full justification for his conduct. When, on the following morning, Dr. Priestley breakfasted with him in Craven Street, the conversation naturally turned upon the memorable scene of the preceding day. "I never before," said Franklin to his brother philosopher, "was so sensible of the power of a good conscience. If I had not considered the thing for which I was so insulted as one of the best actions of my life, and what I should certainly do again in the same circumstances, I could not have supported it." * Within twenty-four hours after he had quitted the council-chamber, two other affronts, as provoking as they were injudicious, were put upon him, and upon the American people. In the first place, the memorial from Massachusetts was represented to the King by his Council as "groundless, vexatious, scandalous, and calculated only for the seditious purpose of keeping up a spirit of clamour and discontent;" † and secondly Franklin received his dismissal from his situation as Deputy Postmaster General for America.‡

In connexion with the treatment of Franklin by the Privy Council a remarkable anecdote has been recorded. In anticipation of the anxiously looked-for day, which was

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. pp. 359, 360.

† MS. entry in the Privy Council Book, 29 January. The same entry furnishes the names of the "thirty-five" members who were present at this Council, viz.,—The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Queensberry, Earl Gower, the Earls of Suffolk, Denbigh, Sandwich, Rochfort, Marchmont, Dartmouth, Buckinghamshire, Harcourt, Hillsborough, Viscounts Townshend and Falmouth, Lords North, Le Despencer, Cathcart, Hyde, Lord George Sackville, the Bishop of London, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Sir Jeffrey Amherst, Sir John Eardley Wilmot, Sir Lawrence Dundas, Sir Thomas Parker, Lord Chief Justice De Grey, General Conway, James Stuart Mackenzie, Welbore Ellis, Hans Stanley, Richard Rigby, Thomas Townshend, Jun., George Onslow, George Rice, and Charles Jenkinson, afterwards Earl of Liverpool.

‡ Annual Register for 1774, p. 86. This situation is said to have been barren of revenue till Franklin was appointed to it, and to have ceased to yield any receipts so soon as he was dismissed. *Bancroft's Hist. of the American Revolution*, vol. iii. p. 553.

destined alike to secure Independence to America and to complete the humiliation of his patrician deriders, Franklin carefully laid by the "full-dress suit of Manchester velvet" which he had worn when laughed to scorn by the Lords of the Council at Whitehall. Only on one more occasion, according to his friends, he wore it, when, four years afterwards, as Commissioner from the United States to the Court of Versailles, he signed the famous treaties of Commerce and Alliance with France.*

In the mean time, another change, introduced by Lord North into the Revenue code, was about to give birth to fresh discontents and fresh disturbances in the Province of Massachusetts. In consequence of the trade of the East India Company having fallen into an almost stagnant condition, it was resolved by Ministers, among other remedial measures, to allow the Company to carry their tea direct to the American ports, and there land it, subject to a trifling duty of threepence a pound to be paid by the Colonists. At the same time, it was proposed to take off the Customs duty in England, amounting to one shilling in the pound, a concession which—inasmuch as it would diminish the cost of tea in the Colonies—would, it was hoped, not only afford gratification to the Americans, and induce them to break up their non-importation societies, but 1773.

* Respecting the truth of this anecdote, see, on the one hand, the evidence of Doctors Priestley and Bancroft, as given in *Franklin's Life and Writings*, vol. i. pp. 358, 360, *note, third edition*, and *Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 495, *note;* and, on the other hand, see *Sparks's Edition of Franklin's Works*, vol. i. p. 488, *note*, and the *North American Review for July* 1852. There is even reason for believing that Franklin wore the "full-dress suit of Manchester velvet" on a second and still more important occasion; namely, when, in 1782, he signed the preliminaries of the Treaty by which Great Britain acknowledged the Independence of America. This latter presumption, according to the late Mr. Allen, "rests on authority not slightly to be rejected. It was related to Lord Holland by Lord St. Helens, one of the Plenipotentiaries employed in negotiating the Treaty, and the lasting impression it made on Lord St. Helens leaves little doubt of the accuracy of his recollection. He could not speak without indignation of the triumphant air with which Franklin told them he had laid by and preserved his coat for such an occasion." *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. pp. 384—5. See also *Sir G. Cornewall Lewis's "Administrations of Great Britain,"* p. 49, *note.*

would produce the further effect of putting an end to the smuggling trade with Holland, which, in the article of tea, was being carried on to a very injurious extent. The measure, although its judiciousness as a commercial expedient was afterwards called in question, was nevertheless accepted with gratitude by the East India Company, and in due course passed into law without opposition, and almost without comment.

Very different, however, from what had been anticipated, was the effect which this well-intentioned measure produced upon the minds of the Colonists. The word "tax" still grated as harshly as ever on American ears. Great Britain, they insisted, had evidently some sinister object in view. If they accepted the measure, they said, the consequences might prove fatal to their liberties. A window-tax, a hearth-tax, a land-tax, even a poll-tax, would in all probability follow. Accordingly, for some time previously to the Company's ships making their appearance off the American coast, it was evident that a violent opposition would be offered to the landing of their cargoes. In many places the consignees of tea were compelled to fling up their agencies; at Philadelphia the pilots were warned not to conduct the tea-ships into port; at New York it was given out that they were freighted—not with tea, but with fetters.

Such was the excited state of public feeling in America when the first tea-ship made its appearance in the port of Boston. A project for destroying its cargo was speedily organized and matured. At a time, when the town was to all appearance in a state of perfect tranquillity, a vast concourse of people were all at once to be seen wending
Dec. 16. 1774. their way in the direction of the quay. Interspersed with the crowd were a number of individuals disguised and painted as Mohawk Indians, who, suddenly separating themselves from their companions, flung themselves on board the tea-ships, mastered the crews, and took posses-

sion of the cargoes. Within the space of two hours, three hundred and forty-two chests of tea were broken open, and their contents, valued at £18,000, flung into the sea. The authors of the outrage then quietly dispersed to their homes, leaving Boston to the enjoyment of its accustomed tranquillity. "Last evening between 6 and 7 o'clock," writes Rear-Admiral Montagu * from Boston to the Secretary of the Admiralty, "a large mob assembled with axes, &c., encouraged by Mr. John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and others, and marched in a body to the wharf where the tea-ships lay, and there destroyed the whole by starting it into the sea. During the whole of this transaction neither the Governor, Magistrates, owner, or the Revenue Officers of this place, ever called for my assistance. If they had, I could easily have prevented the execution of this plan, but must have endangered the lives of many innocent people by firing upon the town." †

The same dogged determination to prevent the purchase and landing of tea prevailed in other States. At New York it was only under the protection of the fort guns that the tea-ships could land their cargoes. At Charleston a large quantity of the obnoxious article perished in damp cellars for want of purchasers; while in many places, in consequence of the want of consignees, the masters of the tea-ships were compelled to put to sea again with their valuable cargoes.

That the news of the outrage committed by the people of Boston should have excited considerable indignation in the mother-country was only to be expected. Even their stanchest friends and well-wishers were unable to defend their conduct. "The violence committed upon the tea-cargo," writes Chatham to Shelburne, "is certainly cri-

* Rear-Admiral John Montagu, Commander in Chief on the North Coast of America. He died an Admiral of the White in 1795.

† Admiralty Records, MS.

minal; nor would it be real kindness to the Americans to adopt their passions and wild pretensions, when they manifestly violate the most indispensable ties of society."* On the people of Boston themselves fell the worst consequences of their recent lawless proceedings. It was absolutely necessary, was the language of Ministers in Parliament, that more rigorous measures should be resorted to, in order to secure the proper execution of the laws in the Colonies, and their dependence upon the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain. Accordingly, in due time, Lord North brought forward his famous Boston Port Bill, one of the ordi-
Mar. 14. nances of which was the removal of the Custom House of Boston to the sea-port town of Salem, about sixteen miles distant, and the closing of the former flourishing port against all commerce, until such time as compensation should be made to the East India Company for the destruction of their tea, and the Crown be satisfied that for the future full and dutiful obedience to the laws would be rendered by the refractory Colonists. A certain amount of opposition was offered to the Bill in the Lords as well as Commons, but eventually it passed through both Houses without a division in either House.

However reprehensible may have been the conduct of the rioters at Boston, it seems to be pretty generally admitted that the Boston Port Bill was both an ill-advised and a tyrannical measure. It was obviously ill-advised, because it created a precedent which was calculated to spread universal alarm and anger over America; and it was tyrannical, not only because it condemned the accused without affording them a hearing, but because it punished the innocent in common with the guilty. "Reparation," writes Chatham to Shelburne, "ought first to be demanded in a solemn manner and refused by the town

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 336.

and magistracy of Boston, before such a bill of pains and penalties can be called just."* The illustrious Washington was of the same opinion. "The conduct of the Boston people," he wrote, "could not justify the rigour of the measure, unless there had been a requisition of payment, and refusal of it."†

While the Boston Port Bill was still under consideration in the House of Lords, Lord North was engaged in bringing forward another important and no less arbitrary measure, the Massachusetts Government Bill. The Governor of the province, he insisted, had no power to uphold the authority with which he was invested. "There must be something radically wrong," he said, "in that constitution, in which no magistrate for a series of years had done his duty in such a manner as to enforce obedience to the laws."‡ Under these circumstances, he not only proposed that the Council of the Province, instead of being elected by the people as heretofore, should be appointed by the Crown, but also that the Governor should have the nomination of the Judges, the Magistrates, and Sheriffs. So gross a violation of the liberty of the subject—so unscrupulous an invasion of constitutional rights—had not been attempted by a British Minister since the day when Massachusetts had received its charter from the hands of William of Orange. At once, every right-minded American resident in England, without waiting to learn the sentiments of his countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, raised his voice against so infamous a proposal to render justice subservient to the Crown. In Parliament also it met with violent opposition. The people of Massachusetts, said Governor Pownall, instead of being a set of thankless, discontented, and turbulent rioters, such as their enemies

April.

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 337.

† To B. Fairfax, July 20, 1774: *Washington's Works*, vol. ii. p. 303.

‡ Parl. Hist., vol. xvii. col. 1192.

had represented them, were, as a community, as religious, conscientious, and peaceable a people, as any in his Majesty's dominions. Lord North, however, was not to be diverted from his purpose. "The Americans have tarred and feathered your subjects," he said, "have plundered your merchants, burned your ships, denied all obedience to your laws and authority; yet so clement, and so long-forbearing has our conduct been, that it is incumbent on us now to take a different course. Whatever may be the consequence, we must risk something. If we do not, all is over." Once more the experienced ex-governor endeavoured to induce Ministers to listen to reason, but again with little effect. If they persisted, he told them, in their present arbitrary policy, then indeed "all *was* over." "I tell you," he exclaimed emphatically, "that the Americans will oppose the measures, now proposed by you, in a more vigorous way than before. The Committees of Correspondence in the different provinces are in constant communication. They trust not in the conveyance of the post-office. They have set up a constitutional courier, who will soon grow up and supersede your post-office. As soon as intelligence of these affairs reaches them, they will judge it necessary to communicate with each other. It will be found inconvenient and ineffectual to do so by letters. They must confer. They will hold a Conference; and to what these committees, thus met in congress, will grow up, I will not say. Should recourse be had to arms, you will hear of other officers than those appointed by your governor. Should matters once come to that, it will be, as it was in the late civil wars of this country, of little consequence to dispute who were the aggressors. That will be merely matter of opinion." * Pownall's prophetic words shared the fate of many similar warnings. Ministers not

* Parl. Hist., vol. xvii. cols. 1280, 1283, 1284.

only triumphed in both Houses of Parliament, but were enabled, in the course of the Session, to carry another tyrannical measure, which empowered the Governor of Massachusetts, in cases of murder or any other capital offence, to send the accused for trial, either to Great Britain or to one of her Colonies, on his own individual authority. To this measure also considerable opposition was offered in each House of Parliament, yet it was carried into law by large majorities. May 6.

CHAPTER XXV.

Excitement in the American Colonies—Strenuous resistance to the coercive measures of Parliament—Closing of Boston Port—Severe Distress in consequence—Sympathy in the Provinces and in England—General Congress held at Philadelphia—Military preparations—Lord Chatham's Speech on moving an Address to the Crown to remove the troops from Boston—His Speech on proposing Conciliatory measures—Rejection of his motion—Defeat of the motion to hear Franklin, and two other American agents, at the Bar of the House of Commons—State of opinion in the Provinces.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the grief and consternation which pervaded the population of Massachusetts, so soon as the intelligence reached them that their ancient charter had been violated, and that the noble Port of Boston, of whose rising commerce they were justly proud, was about to be closed. Nor was the consternation confined to the people of Massachusetts. The tidings flew with an electric effect over the length and breadth of the land. Before a month had elapsed, the people of America from Lake Huron to the Gulf of Mexico had made the cause of Massachusetts their own. In many places the Boston Port Bill was printed with a black border round it, and cried in the streets as "A barbarous, cruel, bloody, and inhuman murder." If, said the Americans, they permitted one Province to be robbed of its charter without remonstrance and opposition, who would guarantee that the charter of his own Province would not be the next violated? The inhabitants of Baltimore were the first to encourage their brethren in Massachusetts, by advocating a suspension of trade with Great Britain, and by declaring in favour of sending delegates to a general Continental Congress. New Hampshire, though still affec-

tionately attached to the mother-country—New Jersey, destined to be the scene of more than one hard-fought struggle in the impending contest—and even South Carolina, though scarcely strong enough to defend herself against the fierce Creek and Cherokee Indians who hovered in formidable numbers along her frontiers,—nevertheless declared themselves, through their several Assemblies, prepared to stand by Massachusetts and by one another even unto death. Not less ardent was the spirit which animated the people of Virginia, that romantic region which had given birth to Washington, to Patrick Henry, and to Jefferson, and which was destined to be the scene of the crowning success which gave America her Independence. There, the majority of the House of Burgesses, averse as they were to sever the ties which bound them to the land of their forefathers, nevertheless passed a resolution that, rather than surrender their liberties, they would take up arms and leave their cause to be decided by the God of Battles. That resolution Washington hesitated not to forward to his constituents. Let us, said the men of Williamsburg, implore the Almighty to inspire the people of America with one heart and soul in resisting, by all just and legitimate means, the invasion of our rights! North Carolina spoke the same language, and adopted the principles of Virginia. Even in Pennsylvania, the most peaceful, and in New York, the most loyal of the Colonies, it was resolved that all constitutional expedients should be resorted to for the defence of their civil rights; and further that the proper means of defending those rights lay in sending delegates to a Continental Congress.

It was on the 1st of June 1774, as the different belfries of Boston struck twelve, that its inhabitants witnessed the mournful spectacle of their port being closed, their custom-house shut up, and their city placed in a state of blockade. Thus arbitrarily and irrationally was the most prosperous commercial city in America reduced to a state of want and

dependence, if not of despair! From this time, month after month passed away, and not a sail was allowed to be unfurled in its lately cheerful and busy harbour. Not a ship was to be seen discharging its cargo on its noble wharves. The warehouses of the merchants were closed. Their merchandise had been rendered valueless. The cheerful voice of the sailor, and the hammer of the shipwright, were to be heard no more. Their figures, as they scowled upon the quays, or wandered listlessly along the streets, told too plainly that their occupation was at an end. As for their fellow-citizens, they had little but sympathy to offer them. They themselves were threatened with want. The miseries of an inclement winter were at hand.

"Oh Boston! late with every pleasure crowned,
Where Commerce triumphed on the favouring gales,
And each pleased eye that roved in prospect round
Hailed thy bright spires and blessed thy opening sails;
Thy plenteous marts with rich profusion smiled,
The gay throng crowded in thy spacious streets;
From either Ind thy cheerful stores were filled,
Thy ports were gladdened with unnumbered fleets;
Forests, more fair than in their native vales,
Tall groves of masts, arose in beauteous pride;
The waves were whitened by the swelling sails,
And plenty waited on the neighbouring tide.
Alas, how changed! the swelling sails no more
Catch the fair winds, and wanton in the sky,
But hostile beaks affright the guarded shore,
And pointed thunders all access deny.
No more the merchant greets his promised gains;
No busy throngs obstruct the mournful way;
O'er the sad marts a gloomy silence reigns,
And through the streets the sons of rapine stray."*

Neither were the desolating consequences of British legislation confined to the town of Boston alone. The whole Province of Massachusetts groaned under the effects of oppression and misrule. The provisions of the "Massachusetts Government Bill" had been carried into operation

* Extract from a poem, entitled "An Elegy on the Times," printed in the *Massachusetts Spy* for 22 September 1774.

no less effectually than those of the "Boston Port Bill." Never since, a hundred years previously, the wild Indians had ravaged its cornfields and destroyed its towns, had the Blue Hills—the *Massachusetts* of the Indian—looked down upon a more disheartened population. Suddenly a peaceful and enlightened people, without having been guilty of any "definitive legal offence,"* and without having been allowed a hearing in their defence, found themselves not only robbed of the Charter which they had enjoyed since the great Revolution in 1688, but placed at the mercy of a hostile Governor, to whom were entrusted powers far in excess of those which the British Constitution vests in the Sovereign and his Privy Council. The nominations to the Council of the Colony, the selection of the Judges, and the dispensation of justice, were made subservient to the will or caprice of a mere nominee of the Crown. Even the right of selecting jurymen was transferred from the inhabitants to the Sheriff, and the Sheriff was made dependent for his office upon the will of the Governor.

In the mean time, in order to carry out with greater vigour the measures of the British Legislature, General Gage, the Commander in Chief of the British forces in America, had been appointed Governor of Massachusetts in Hutchinson's room. Notwithstanding, however, his having under his command six regiments of British Infantry, with a corresponding force of Artillery, he found his power and authority confined to the town of Boston. He had been formerly popular, almost beloved, in the province, but his popularity had sunk under the weight of aversion entertained by the Colonists, alike for his office and for his employers. It was to no purpose that he looked for aid and advice to his Council. Its members,

* See the Protest of the Lords, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xvii. cols. 1351—3. The peers who signed it were Richmond, Rockingham, Leinster, Fitzwilliam, Portland, Manchester, Ponsonby, and Craven.

having been elected in pursuance of the recent arbitrary Act of Parliament, had been denounced by their fellow-citizens as enemies of their country. Of the thirty-six individuals, of whom it ought to have been composed, only twenty-four could be induced to take the oaths of Office, and of these one half had since resigned their posts, leaving the remainder in constant apprehension of popular violence. The Sheriffs and Magistrates felt themselves in safety only when they were within hail of a British sentinel. Not only were the Judges prevented holding their sittings from the want of Jurymen, but no single individual could be found bold enough to come forward to act in the latter capacity. Throughout the fair Province of Massachusetts anarchy was the order of the day. To the Secretary of the Admiralty, we find the Naval Commander in Chief on the station, Vice Admiral Graves, writing on the 31st of August—"Disguised mobs have lately in the night-time surrounded the houses of the newly made Councillors of this Province, and endeavoured, by threatening their lives and properties, to compel them to resign the King's appointment. One of those Councillors called on me this morning, who is obliged to quit his house and for safety come with his family to Boston. There are more in the same situation, and there is great reason to apprehend every extravagance of behaviour from these misled, violent people."* Again the Admiral writes on the 3rd of September—"Since I closed my last letter, affairs here have suddenly taken a more serious turn than I believe was generally apprehended. The mob yesterday assembled in great numbers at Cambridge, a place eight miles from Boston, some with arms, others with clubs. They seized the High Sheriff of the County and obliged him, to save his life, to sign an obligation to desist entirely from any execution of his

* Admiralty Records, MS.

duties under the new laws. They pursued a Commissioner of the Customs within sight of the piquet of the Guard at the Town Neck, and it was with the utmost difficulty he got safe to Boston, now become the only place of safety for people in employment under the Crown. Their infatuation seems to be such, that an effectual interposition of the military power is, I am afraid, the only means left to restore these deluded people to a right use of their reason." *

* Admiralty Records, M.S. Enclosed in Admiral Graves's letter is a small placard, printed in large type, a copy of which he states was "stuck up at the office doors of all the lawyers in Boston." It is as follows—

"Thursday, *September* 1, 1774.

"Any one and every one of the Bar, that shall presume after this day to appear in Court, or otherwise to do any business with the Judges, shall assuredly suffer the pains of Death."

The following ballad, copied from the *Massachusetts Spy* newspaper, of September 1, may be taken as a fair specimen of the inflammatory poetry which was circulated throughout America at this exciting time—

THE GLORIOUS SEVENTY-FOUR.

A NEW SONG.

Tune—Hearts of Oak.

1.

"Come, come, my brave boys, from my song you shall hear
That we'll crown Seventy-Four, a most glorious year,
We'll convince Bute and Mansfield and North, though they rave,
Britons still, like themselves, spurn the chains of a slave.

Chorus—

"Hearts of oak were our sires,
Hearts of oak are their sons,
Like them we are ready, as firm and as steady,
To fight for our freedom with swords and with guns.

2.

"Foolish elves! to conjecture, by crossing of mains,
That the true blood of freemen would change in our veins;
Let us scorch, let us freeze, from the line to the pole
Britain's sons still retain all their freedom of soul.
Hearts of oak were our sires, &c.

3.

"See, our rights to invade, Britain's dastardly foes,
Sending Hysons and Congoes, did vainly suppose

In the mean time, sympathy with the wrongs of the people of Massachusetts, and admiration of the spirited front which they opposed to British tyranny, were daily taking deeper root in the hearts of their fellow-countrymen. "I have now," writes General Lee to a friend, "lately run through the Colonies, and can assure you, by all that is solemn and sacred, that there is not a man on the whole Continent, placemen and some High Churchmen excepted, who is not determined to sacrifice his property, his life, his wife, family, children, in the cause of Boston, which he justly considers as his own." * In many of the States, the day on which Boston Port was closed was kept as a day of

That poor shallow pates like themselves we were grown,
And our hearts were as servile and base as their own.
Hearts of oak were our sires, &c.

4.

"Their tea still is driven away from our shores,
Or presented to Neptune, or rots in our stores;
But to awe, to divide, till we crouch to their sway,
On brave Boston their vengeance they fiercely display.
Hearts of oak were our sires, &c.

5.

"Now, unasked we unite, we agree to a man,
See our stores flow to Boston from rear and from van:
Hark, the shout how it flies! freedom's voice how it sounds!
From each country, each clime, hark the echo rebounds!
Hearts of oak were our sires, &c.

6.

"Across the Atlantic, so thundering its roar,
It has roused Britain's Genius who dozed on his shore;
'Who has injured my sons, my brave boys, o'er the main?
Whose spirit to vigour renews me again.'
Hearts of oak were our sires, &c.

7.

"'With sons, whom I fostered and cherished of yore,
Fair freedom shall flourish till time is no more;
No tyrant shall rule them, 'tis Heaven's decree;
They shall never be slaves while they dare to be free.'
Hearts of oak were our sires, &c."

* Life of General Charles Lee: *Sparks's American Biography*, vol. viii. p. 69. 2nd Series.

humiliation and fast. In Virginia, on that memorable day, the sad and thoughtful countenance of George Washington might be seen devoutly raised to Heaven as he joined his fellow-citizens in prayer to the Supreme Being to avert from their happy country the horrors of Civil War, and the destruction of their civil rights. On that day, also, the true patriot and profound thinker, George Mason,* exhorted his sons and daughters, not only to devote it to religious mortification, but to appear in their accustomed places in church, habited in mourning. At Philadelphia the inhabitants closed their houses. "A stillness reigned over the city, which exhibited an appearance of the deepest distress." † The colours of the ships were hoisted half mast high. The bells of the churches tolled as if for the dead. Thus encouraged by the sympathy of their fellow-countrymen, the people of Massachusetts resolved to resist to the last. Their leaders, though hourly in danger of being arrested and sent for trial in a foreign land, set them an example which they nobly followed. "We have a post to maintain," were the eloquent words of Samuel Adams; "to desert which would entail on us the curses of posterity. The virtue of our ancestors inspires us. They were contented with clams and mussels. For my own part, I have been wont to converse with poverty; and, however disagreeable a companion she may be thought to be by the affluent and luxurious, who never were acquainted with her, I can live happily with her the remainder of my days, if I can thereby contribute to the redemption of my country." ‡

But it was the increasing sufferings of the inhabitants of

* The name of this eminent statesman deserves to be recorded, were it for no other reason than that, attached as he was to a Union of all the American States, he sought to exclude the Southern States from the Confederacy unless they agreed to discontinue Slave Traffic. He died at his seat, Gunston Hall, Virginia, in 1792, at the age of sixty-seven.

† Holmes's American Annals, vol. ii. p. 258.

‡ Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 59.

Boston, and the distress and want to which that once flourishing and populous city was reduced, which naturally excited the deepest sympathy. No sooner, therefore, did their unhappy condition become generally known, than, even in the most distant and wildest regions of the great Continent, the heart warmed for them, and the purse-strings were drawn, to relieve their necessities. In Massachusetts every village, almost every farm-house, had already subscribed its tithe to lighten the calamity which bore so heavily on the poor of Boston. In Fairfax County, Virginia, Washington headed a subscription with a contribution of fifty pounds. "The crisis," he said, "is arrived when we must assert our rights, or submit to every imposition that can be heaped upon us, till custom and use shall make us tame and abject slaves." From South and North Carolina; from Connecticut; from the backwoodsmen of Augusta county high up the valley of Virginia; from the German settlers on the banks of the Shenandoah, and even from the French inhabitants of Quebec, came speedy and generous aid in the form of dollars, of flocks of sheep, of barrels of rice, and sacks of wheat. Lastly, from Great Britain came, not only expressions of encouragement and sympathy, but much more substantial proofs of kindness.*

In many a heart-stirring appeal, the inhabitants of Massachusetts exhorted the sufferers in Boston to remain true and strong in heart. "Be not disheartened nor dismayed in this day of great trials," wrote to them the northern borderers of the Province. "We heartily sympathize with you, and are always ready to do all in our power for your support, comfort, and relief; knowing that Providence has placed you where you must stand the first shock. We consider that we are all embarked in one bottom, and must sink or swim together. We think if we submit to

* Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. p. 350, *note*, and p. 457.

these regulations all is gone. Our forefathers passed the vast Atlantic, and spent their blood and treasure, that they might enjoy their liberties, both civil and religious, and transmit them to their posterity. Their children have waded through seas of difficulty, to leave us free and happy in the enjoyment of English privileges. Now, if we should give them up, can our children rise and call us blessed?" In the same eloquent language, and undaunted spirit, spoke out the people of Concord. "Our fathers," they said, "left us a fair inheritance, purchased by blood and treasure. This we are resolved to transmit equally fair to our children. No danger shall affright, no difficulties intimidate us; and if, in support of our rights, we are called to encounter even death, we are yet undaunted; sensible that he can never die too soon, who lays down his life in support of the laws and liberties of his country."* Similar encouragement reached the ears of the inhabitants of Boston from the wisest and the best of the community. If the pulses of our fellow-countrymen, exclaimed Jefferson, should beat calmly, other experiments will be tried subversive of our liberties, till the measure of despotism be filled up. Washington even offered to raise and support at his own expense a thousand men, and to march them, if necessary, to the relief of the inhabitants of Boston.†

In the mean time, a measure, no less important to the interests of the Colonists than menacing to the maintenance of British authority in America, had, under many difficulties, been successfully accomplished beyond the Atlantic. For some time past, the united voice of the people of America had called for a General Continental Congress, for the purpose of freely discussing and devising remedies for their wrongs. At length, principally owing to the exertions of the "Com-

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 112.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 85.

mittees of Correspondence" in the different States, that much-needed synod had been called into existence. The first meeting—at which there were present fifty-five members selected by the inhabitants of the twelve Colonies—took place on the 5th of September in the Carpenter's Hall at Philadelphia. More solemn, or more difficult duties, than those which were imposed upon them, it would not be easy to imagine. It must be remembered that they represented the interests, not only of the Anglo-Saxon and dominant race, but those of men of various nations, of various political views, and of many creeds. Their constituents, besides those who spoke the mother-tongue, consisted of French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes; of Calvinists, who deemed it a virtue to defend their liberties with the sword, and of Quakers who shrunk from war with abhorrence; of political enthusiasts who were willing at once to rush into a contest with the mother-country, and of wealthy and cautious landowners and merchants, to whom war might possibly prove ruin. "Whom did they represent?" asks the eminent historian of the United States, "and what were their functions? They were committees from twelve Colonies, deputed to consult on measures of conciliation, with no means of resistance to oppression beyond a voluntary agreement for the suspension of importations from Great Britain. They formed no confederacy. They were not an executive government. They were not even a legislative body. They owed the use of a hall for their sessions to the courtesy of the carpenters of the city. There was not a foot of land on which they had a right to execute their decisions, and they had not one civil officer to carry out their commands, nor the power to appoint one. Nor was one soldier enlisted, nor one officer commissioned in their name. They had no treasury; and neither authority to lay a tax, nor to borrow money." *

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. pp. 353—4.

In the words of another American historian—"The most eminent and respected citizens of the various Colonies were now for the first time assembled together. Known to each other by reputation and correspondence, but personally unacquainted; conscious that the eyes of their agitated countrymen, together with the rising attention and interest of Europe, were earnestly fixed upon them, and that the liberties of three millions of people, and the destiny of the greatest Commonwealth in the world, were staked on the wisdom and vigour of their conduct, they were deeply and even painfully impressed with the solemn responsibility that attached to the functions they had undertaken." *

Nevertheless, the Congress discharged its duties with extraordinary discretion and energy. The Congress, observed Lord Chatham to Franklin, was, in his opinion, "the most honourable assembly of statesmen since those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, in the most virtuous times." † Its sitting lasted only from the 5th of September to the 26th of October; yet short as was the Session, measures of the boldest and most decisive character were agreed upon by the uncompromising provincialists. While, on the one hand, they acknowledged the sovereignty of Great Britain, and disclaimed all intention of aiming at Independence, they, at the same time, unanimously expressed their determination to maintain the rights and liberties which had descended to them from their ancestors. One of their boldest Resolutions had reference to the state of affairs in Massachusetts. The Congress not only declared the late Acts of Parliament, affecting that Province, to be unconstitutional and oppressive, but intimated that, in the event of any coercive attempts being made to carry them into effect, the whole force of America should be arrayed on her side. An important document

* Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. pp. 355—6.
† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 478. Third Edition.

was next approved of by the Congress, in which—after having set forth the constitutional and natural rights and privileges to which they believed themselves entitled, and the grievances for which they required redress—they recommended to their fellow-citizens the adoption of a "non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement." till such time as the British Legislature should think proper to abandon her arbitrary designs upon their liberties, their property, and their lives. To the King they addressed a respectful petition; and lastly they drew up an eloquent appeal to their fellow-subjects in Great Britain, in which they set forth their grievances, and entreated sympathy for their cause. "To your justice," they wrote to the people of England, "we appeal. You have been told that we are impatient of government and desirous of Independency. These are calumnies. Permit us to be as free as yourselves, and we shall ever esteem a union with you to be our greatest glory and our greatest happiness. But, if you are determined that your ministers shall wantonly sport with the rights of mankind; if neither the voice of justice, the dictates of law, the principles of the Constitution, or the suggestions of humanity, can restrain your hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause, we must then tell you that we will never submit to any ministry or nation in the world." The proceedings of Congress met with the almost entire approval of Lord Chatham. To Mr. Sayre, for instance, he writes on the 24th of December 1774—"I have not words to express my satisfaction that the Congress has conducted this most arduous and delicate business with such manly wisdom and calm resolution. Very few are the things, contained in their resolves, that I could wish had been otherwise. Upon the whole, I think it must be evident to every unprejudiced man in England who feels for the rights of mankind, that America, under all her oppressions and provocations, holds forth to us the

most fair and just opening, for restoring harmony and affectionate intercourse as heretofore." *

Congress, having discharged its important duties, and having declared itself adjourned till the 10th of May, the several delegates dispersed to their respective homes. It was not, however, to spend their time in idleness that they separated, but to prepare for the worst that might possibly happen. The Militia in the different provinces were called out and carefully drilled. Premiums were offered for the production of saltpetre. Measures were taken for the home-manufacture of arms, gunpowder, and other warlike stores, which had hitherto been obtained from the mother-country. On Rhode Island forty pieces of artillery were seized by the people in order to prevent their being hereafter turned against them by the military, and in New Hampshire a small fort was surprised, and the military stores which it contained were taken possession of by the provincialists.

Good reason, indeed, had the Americans for preparing for evil times. For years, as has been already stated, their petitions and remonstrances had been thrown on one side and forgotten, by successive Secretaries of State. "For the most trifling reasons," said Jefferson, "and sometimes for no conceivable reason at all, his Majesty has rejected laws of the most salutary tendency." † Fortunately for America, she was internally rich in all those resources which, in the event of her being compelled to resist oppression by force of arms, were calculated to render her formidable. She was rich in her productive soil; in mines which furnished her with materials for arms; in forests which supplied her with ships; and, lastly, she was rich in the enterprise, the spirit, and in the intelligence of her sons, which enabled them to convert those resources to the best advantage. Of these,

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 368.

† Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 84.

and of other significant facts, which ought to have been duly weighed by the British Legislature, no one was more fully aware than one of the Ministers themselves, the Secretary at War, William Lord Barrington. A written remonstrance on the subject of American affairs, addressed by this nobleman on the 24th of December to the Secretary for the Colonies, Lord Dartmouth, is well worth perusal. Among other arguments, he insists that the contest with the Colonies will cost Great Britain more than she can ever gain; that no Ministry will ever again attempt to impose an internal tax upon them; that it was merely for a point of honour that it was still continued; that, in the event of the Colonies taking up arms, the most signal success must necessarily be attended by the horrors and sufferings of Civil War; that, owing to the vast extent of America, and to the fact of her population being accustomed to fire-arms, success was extremely problematical, and further that, if subdued, they could be only kept in subjection by maintaining large armies and fortresses, the expense of which would be endless and enormous. "It is true," adds Lord Barrington, "they have not hitherto been thought brave; but enthusiasm gives vigour of mind and body, unknown before."*

The British Parliament again assembled on the 29th of November, and, after the transaction of some important business, adjourned to the middle of January. During that interim ample intelligence had reached England of the state of affairs in America; intelligence only too well calculated to create uneasiness and apprehension in the minds of the far-sighted and the thoughtful. To no one was the painful imminence of the peril more obvious than to Lord Chatham, who at once perceived that immediate action, and a truly conciliatory policy, could alone preserve

* Political Life of Lord Barrington, pp. 142—4, 147.

the integrity of the Empire. Accordingly, on the 20th of January, having previously given notice of his intention to move a resolution on American affairs, he appeared in his accustomed place in the House of Lords. The bar of the house was crowded with strangers, the great majority of whom were Americans. Among them was the illustrious Franklin, whom Lord Chatham had met by appointment in the lobby, and with whom he walked arm in arm into the House. "His appearance in the House," writes Franklin, "I observed caused a kind of bustle among the officers, who were hurried in sending messengers for members—I suppose those in connexion with the Ministry—something of importance being expected when that great man appears, it being seldom that his infirmities permit his attendance." *

It was the opinion, both of Franklin and of Lord Chatham, that the first step, which it was the duty and policy of the Legislature to take, was to order at once the removal of the British troops from Boston, and thus relieve a free and jealous people of the provoking spectacle of a hostile military force parading their streets and, by their presence, menacing them with the gibbet and the sword. A mere accident, argued Franklin, a casual squabble between a drunken porter and a hotheaded soldier, might at any moment kindle the flames of civil war over the whole continent of America. The army at Boston, he said, could by no possibility answer any good purpose; neither could terms of accommodation be entered upon by the Americans so long as the bayonet was at their breasts. † It was with these convictions, therefore, that Lord Chatham moved an Address to the Throne for the removal of his Majesty's forces from the town of Boston, as soon as the rigour of the season, and other circumstances

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. pp. 491, 492. Third Edition.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 479.

indispensable to their safety and accommodation, would permit.*

This proposition Lord Chatham followed up by one of his most splendid orations. "I wish, my Lords," he said, "not to lose a day in this urgent, pressing crisis. An hour, now lost in allaying ferments in America, may produce years of calamity. For my own part, I will not desert for a moment the conduct of this weighty business, from the first to the last. Unless nailed to my bed by the extremity of sickness, I will give it unremitted attention. I will knock at the door of this sleeping and confounded Ministry, and will rouse them to a sense of their important danger." †

In this famous speech Lord Chatham, as if by inspiration, foreshadowed the certain consequences of the impending contest; dwelling more especially on the dogged determination of the American people to yield up their liberties only with their lives; on the impossibility of reducing so vast a continent to obedience by force of arms; on the inevitable interference of France and Spain in the unnatural contest, and lastly on the no less inevitable dismemberment of the Empire, in the event of such interference. The army at Boston he spoke of as an army of impotence; an army of irritation and vexation, penned up and pining in inglorious inactivity. What chance, he asked, had so small a force against a brave, generous, and united people, with arms in their hands and courage in their hearts? What chance had Great Britain against three millions of people, the genuine descendants of a valiant and pious ancestry driven to the deserts of the New World by the narrow maxims of a superstitious tyranny? But even supposing, he argued, that the military power of the mother-country should for a time achieve an inglorious triumph, such a success must neces-

* Parliamentary History, vol. xviii. col. 160.

† *Ibid.*, vol. xviii. col. 150, *note.*

sarily be but a temporary and local one. Town after town might be occupied by British troops, and province after province might possibly be reduced; but still a vast territory would be left behind, which the advancing army would have no means of occupying, and much less of retaining in subjection. With only a few regiments in America, and at home with a peace-complement of merely seventeen or eighteen thousand men, the idea of grasping a dominion over eighteen hundred miles of continent, containing a population sufficiently formidable in numbers, and possessing valour, liberty, and the means of existence, was too ridiculous to be thought of for a moment. You may destroy their towns, he said; you may cut them off from the superfluities, even the conveniences, of life, but so long as they retain their forests and their liberties, they are prepared to despise your power. "Is the spirit of persecution," he exclaimed, "never to be appeased? Are the brave sons of those brave forefathers to inherit their sufferings, as they have inherited their virtues? Are they to sustain the infliction of the most oppressive and unexampled severity, beyond the accounts of history, or description of poetry?" *

To the moderation of Congress, and of the American people in general, Lord Chatham paid a high compliment. He had previously, in a private conversation with Franklin, commended the petition of Congress to the King as "decent, manly, and properly expressed;" and he now stood forth to proclaim his admiration of it to the world. "When your Lordships," he said, "look at the papers transmitted to us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation of

* Parliamentary History, vol. xviii. col. 152, *note*.

history, and it has been my favourite study—I have read Thucydides, and have admired the master-states of the world—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your Lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation, must be vain, must be fatal. We shall be forced ultimately to retract. Let us retract while we can, not when we must. I say we must necessarily undo these violent oppressive acts. They must be repealed. You will repeal them. I pledge myself for it that you will in the end repeal them. I stake my reputation on it. I will consent to be taken for an idiot if they are not finally repealed. And then this humiliating necessity! With a dignity becoming your exalted situation, make the first advances to concord, to peace and happiness; for that is your true dignity, to act with prudence and justice." *

Among those who listened to this famous oration, and who shared with Franklin the pleasure and admiration which it produced, was William Pitt, the second son of the great statesman, at this period in his sixteenth year. "Nothing," he writes to his mother, Lady Chatham, on the fol-
Jan. 21. lowing morning, "prevented his speech from being the most forcible that can be imagined, and Administration fully felt it. The matter and manner both were striking; far beyond what I can express. It was everything that was superior; and though it had not the desired effect on an obdurate House of Lords, it must have an infinite effect without doors, the bar being crowded with Americans." †

The House of Lords, however, continued obdurate. Mi-

* Parliamentary History, vol. xviii. cols. 155—6, *note*.
† Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 376.

nisters, utterly incapable of appreciating the character and feelings of a proud, enlightened, and indomitable race, still clung to the fatal delusion that America was to be frightened and bullied into submission; and thus the great statesman had the mortification to find himself defeated by a majority of forty. Doubtless, if Lords Rockingham and Chatham had been agreed upon the subject of American affairs, the result might have been different. The latter, however, still clung to his original convictions that the Constitution conferred no power upon the British Legislature to impose a single tax upon the Colonies against their will; while Lord Rockingham, on the other hand, no less resolutely upheld the wisdom and justice of his famous "Declaratory Act," which had asserted the supreme power of the mother-country. Accordingly, a meeting which, during the Recess, had taken place between the two Lords, terminated without affording satisfaction to either party.* "I look back," writes Lord Rockingham, "with very great satisfaction and content to the line which I—indeed emphatically I—took in the year 1766. The Stamp Act was repealed, and the doubt of the right of this country was fairly fixed." Unfortunately Burke, whose influence over Lord Rockingham was considerable, shared the views of his leader. Lords Camden and Shelburne, on the other hand, warmly supported the opinions of Lord Chatham. "King, Lords, and Commons," exclaimed Lord Camden, "are grand-sounding names, but King, Lords, and Commons may become tyrants as well as others. Tyranny in one, or in more, is the same. It is as lawful to resist the tyranny of many as of one. This has been a doctrine known and acted upon in this country for ages. When the famous Selden was asked by what statute resistance to

* See Lord Rockingham's own account of this remarkable interview, in a letter to Edmund Burke dated January 8th 1775. *Rockingham Papers*, vol. ii. p. 261.

tyranny could be justified, his reply was—'It is to be justified by the custom of England, which is a part of the law of the land!' I will affirm, my Lords, not only as a statesman, a politician, and a philosopher, but as a Common Lawyer, that you have no right to tax America. No man, agreeably to the principles of natural or civil liberty, can be divested of any part of his property without his consent; and whenever oppression begins, resistance becomes lawful and right." *

Lord Chatham, though disheartened, remained undaunted, and accordingly he resolved to make one more effort to avert the impending disruption of the empire, and the shedding of blood. Severally to Lords Shelburne and Stanhope, we find him writing on the 31st of January; that if civil war can yet be prevented, it can only be done by an immediate recourse to further endeavours. During the recent debate he had been taunted, by more than one of his brother-peers, with finding fault with measures, without suggesting remedies. To that reproach he had replied that America was a subject on which he had thought long and deeply, and that in a few days he hoped to lay before their Lordships a general plan of conciliation, which he trusted might restore peace to the empire. †

Eleven days only were allowed to elapse before the illustrious Chatham laid his plan of conciliation before the House of Peers. During that interval he had anxiously consulted with Lord Camden touching the "law-part" of his scheme, and with Franklin as regarded the general views, expectations, and interests of the American people. Twice Franklin had waited on the great statesman at Hayes, and once Lord Chatham had visited Franklin in Craven Street. The latter interview took place in that once famous bay-windowed house, facing the east, to which no

* Belsham's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 83.
† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 494. Third Edition.

passer-by, who held in his heart any esteem for philosophy, patriotism or virtue, could lift his eyes without emotion and reverence.* "He staid with me two hours," writes Franklin; "his equipage waiting at the door. And being there while people were coming from church, it was much taken notice of and talked of, as, at that time, was every little circumstance that men thought might possibly any way affect American affairs. Such a visit from so great a man, on so important a business, flattered not a little my vanity; and the honour of it gave me the more pleasure, as it happened on the very day twelvemonths, that the Ministry had taken so much pains to disgrace me before the Privy Council." †

It was on the 1st of February, that Lord Chatham, surrounded by a mixed audience of careless Lords and eager Americans, rose in his place in the House of Peers, and proposed that admirable conciliatory measure which, if the Legislature had had the wisdom to adopt it, would in all probability have saved an amount of bloodshed, of treasure, of national degradation, and human misery, such as it is painful to contemplate. "Lord Chatham," writes Franklin, "in a most excellent speech introduced, explained, and supported his plan." ‡ That plan was mainly and wisely founded on the temperate demands of the Americans themselves. It proposed to repeal, not only the Boston Port Act, but every other oppressive Act relating to America which had been passed by Parliament since the year 1764; to renounce on the part of Great Britain her assumption of a sovereign right to tax her Colonial dependencies without the consent of their Assemblies; and lastly to guarantee to the several Provinces the future and free enjoyment of their immemorial charters and constitutions. In fact, with the

* Since this passage was written Franklin's residence in Craven Street, Strand, has disappeared. Number 7 now occupies its site.

† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 497. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 500.

single exception of demanding the erasure of the unlucky Declaratory clause from the Statute-book, all that Lord Chatham demanded for the Americans, and all that the Americans asked for themselves, was simply a return to the peaceful and happy state of relationship which had existed between the two countries, previously to George Grenville having mooted his fatal Stamp Bill. In return for the concessions which Lord Chatham proposed should be made by Great Britain to the Colonists, America was to be required to acknowledge, and avow in explicit terms, her dependency upon the British Crown and Legislature, in all matters relating to the general interests of the Empire; she was to recognise especially the right of the parent-country to regulate the commercial policy of both countries; and lastly the several Provinces were to vote and defray the expenses of their own Governments. "So"—were among the concluding words of this famous proposition,—"shall true reconcilement avert impending calamities."*

The Secretary of State, in whose immediate province at this period lay the management of American affairs, was William Earl of Dartmouth.† He was not only an able and rightminded, but he was also a strictly pious person. The dandies nicknamed him the "Psalm-singer;" Cowper has immortalised him as—

"One who wears a coronet, and prays."

Richardson, the Novelist, having been asked whether he

* Parliamentary History, vol. xviii. col. 203.

† William Legge, second Earl of Dartmouth, held the appointment of Secretary of State from August 1772 to November 1775, when he was nominated Keeper of the Privy Seal. In April 1783 he was appointed Lord Steward of the Household, which post he resigned in December following. His death took place 15 July 1801, at the age of seventy. Respecting this estimable nobleman, see *Memoirs of Selina Countess of Huntingdon*, vol. i. p. 335, and vol. ii. pp. 32, 35; *Correspondence of John Duke of Bedford*, vol. iii. p. 222, and *Wraxall's Historical Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 713, Third Edition. "He has in reality," writes Franklin, "no will or judgment of his own, being, with dispositions for the best measures, easily prevailed with to join in the worst." *Franklin's Life and Writings*, vol. i. p. 502.

knew any one who answered to his portrait of Sir Charles Grandison—"Yes," he is reported to have answered, it would apply to Lord Dartmouth, "if he were not a Methodist." * But, however admirable may have been the private character of Lord Dartmouth, he was as little qualified to be trusted at a momentous crisis with the destinies of an empire, as he was capable of contending in eloquence and argument with the illustrious Chatham. † Accordingly, bewildered and confounded, if not convinced by the brilliant speech to which he had been a listener, the timid statesman, after having faltered out a few irresolute expressions, left the responsibility of reply to his colleague Lord Sandwich, who, with great warmth of manner and language, took up the cudgels for Ministers. As the sentiments of this latter nobleman were known to be the same as those of the powerful house of Russell, additional importance naturally attached itself to his words. The American people, said the excited Earl, had not only manifested the most hostile and traitorous designs, but, by the seizure of the King's forts and ammunition, were guilty of actual rebellion. The bill ought to be immediately rejected with the contempt it deserved. He could never believe it to be the production of any British Peer. It seemed to him to be rather the work of some American. He then fixed his gaze upon Franklin, who

* Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. iii. p. 78. Third Edition.

† No man could have been more wisely or eloquently warned of the perilous path which he was pursuing, than Lord Dartmouth had long been warned by his American Correspondent, Joseph Reed, afterwards Secretary to, and Adjutant General under Washington. "Your Lordship," Reed writes to the well meaning Earl in June 1774, "may regard it as a fixed truth, that all the dreadful consequences of civil war will ensue before the Americans will submit to taxation by Parliament." And again he writes—"This country will be deluged with blood before it will submit to taxation by any other power than its own legislature." *Life of Joseph Reed, in Sparks's American Biography*, vol. viii. pp. 252, 278, 2nd Series. The British peer, unfortunately, was not to be diverted from his purpose. "I have had," writes Reed to a relative, "a long letter of two sheets from Lord Dartmouth with his political creed respecting America: bad enough, God knows! But if *he* thinks thus, what may we expect from Hillsborough and the rest!"—*Ibid.*, p. 256.

was standing at the bar. "I fancy I have in my eye," he said, "the person who drew it up; one of the bitterest and most mischievous enemies this country has ever known." This, as Franklin informs us, drew the eyes of many of the Peers upon him; nor was he less the object of attention when Lord Chatham subsequently rose to defend the originality of his own measure, and at the same time the character of the maligned philospher.* The plan, he said, was entirely his own. "Yet," he added, "I make no scruple to declare, that were I the First Minister of this country, and had the care of settling this momentous business, I should not be ashamed of publicly calling to my assistance a person so perfectly acquainted with the whole of American affairs as the gentleman alluded to, and so injuriously reflected on; one whom all Europe holds in high estimation for his knowledge and wisdom, one who ranks with our Boyles and Newtons; one who is an honour, not to the English nation only, but to human nature." † As for the Bill itself, he said prophetically—"Though rejected here, it will make its way to the public, to the nation, to the remotest wilds of America. It will, in such a course, undergo a good deal of cool observation and investigation, and whatever may be its merits or demerits, on which it will stand or fall, it will, I trust, remain a monument of my poor endeavours to serve my country, and, however faulty or defective, will at least manifest how zealous I have been to avert the impending storms which seem ready to burst on it, and for ever overwhelm it in ruin." Then, turning towards Ministers, he vehemently exclaimed—"I am not much astonished—I am not surprised—that men who hate liberty

* "Though many people," writes Franklin, "were pleased to do me the honour of supposing I had a considerable share in composing it, I assure you that the addition of a single word only was made at my instance, viz., '*Constitution*' after '*Charters*'; for my filling up at his request a blank with the title of acts proper to be repealed, which I took from the proceedings of Congress, was no more than might have been done by any copying clerk." *Life and Writings*, vol. i. p. 500.

† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. pp. 500—502.

should detest those who prize it; or that those, who want virtue themselves, should endeavour to persecute those who possess it. Were I disposed, I could demonstrate that the whole of your political conduct has been one continued series of weakness, temerity, despotism, ignorance, futility, negligence, blundering, and the most notorious servility, incapacity and corruption. On re-consideration, I must allow you one merit, a strict attention to your own interests. In that view you appear sound statesmen and able politicians. But sure I am, such are your well-known characters and abilities, that any plan of reconciliation, however moderate, wise and feasible, must fail in your hands. Who can wonder then that you should put a negative on any measure which must annihilate your power, deprive you of your emoluments, and at once reduce you to that state of insignificance for which God and nature designed you." *

Lord Chatham's Bill was rejected by a majority of sixty-one to thirty-two. All-important as was the question, and trifling as would have been the concession to the feelings of the American people, the Lords had not the decency to allow it to be read a second time. But although Lord Chatham's eloquence, as Franklin observes, availed no more in that Assembly than "the whistling of the winds," very different was the effect which it produced on the other side of the Atlantic. As he himself had predicted, his thrilling words penetrated to the farthest wilds of America, inspiring language and sentiments as heart-stirring as his own. "The sacred rights of mankind," wrote the youthful Alexander Hamilton,† "are not to be rummaged for among old

* Parliamentary History, vol. xviii. col. 211.

† Alexander Hamilton, at this period an enthusiastic youth of eighteen, subsequently commanded a battalion of Light Infantry in the campaign which led to Lord Cornwallis's surrender, and afterwards became the first Secretary of the Treasury to the new United States. He was wounded in a duel at Hoboken on the 11th of July 1804, of the effects of which he died on the following day, at the age of forty-seven. His son had a few years previously been killed in a duel on precisely the same spot.

parchments and musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power. Civil liberty cannot be wrested from any people without the most manifold violation of justice, and the most aggravated guilt. The nations—Turkey, Russia, France, Spain, and all other despotic kingdoms in the world—have an inherent right, whenever they please, to shake off the yoke of servitude, though sanctioned by immemorial usage, and to model their government upon the principles of civil liberty." * Happily the sentiments of the House of Lords at this time were not altogether the sentiments of the people of England. "The common people," writes Lord Camden, "hold the war in abhorrence, and the merchants and tradesmen, for obvious reasons, are against it."—"But I am grieved," he adds, "to observe, that the landed interest is almost altogether anti-American." †

In the House of Commons, whenever American affairs came under discussion, prejudice ran no less high than in the House of Lords. It was to no purpose that the same powerful arguments were repeated, which had been urged in the Upper House. It was to no purpose that, during the debate on the Address to the Throne, more than one eloquent and prophetic voice denounced the folly and rashness of the Government. "A fit and proper resistance," said Wilkes, "is not a Revolution. Who can tell whether, in consequence of this day's mad and violent Address, the scabbard may not be thrown away by the Americans as well as by us; and, should success attend them, whether, in a few years, the Americans may not celebrate the glorious era of the Revolution of 1775, as we do that of 1688? Success crowned the generous effort of

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. pp. 215—6.

† Letter to Lord Chatham, February 12: *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iv. p. 401.

our forefathers for freedom, else they had died on the scaffold as traitors and rebels, and the period of our history, which does us the most honour, would have been deemed a rebellion against lawful authority, not a resistance sanctioned by all the laws of God and man." * It was to no purpose that petitions from the American merchants, and from the West India sugar-planters resident in London, were laid on the table of the House. It was to no purpose that similar appeals poured in from the great cities of Liverpool, Bristol, and Glasgow. Should the present state of affairs, they said, be permitted to continue, it must entail commercial ruin both on Great Britain and on her Colonies. Yet the House of Commons, instead of taking these urgent remonstrances into full and instant consideration, contented itself with referring them to a separate committee—a "*Coventry committee*"—as Burke styled it—"a committee of Oblivion." It was in vain also that Franklin, and two other American Agents in London, appealed to be heard at the Bar of the House of Commons, in order that they might be able to explain the objects and desires of their clients. Ministers, chiefly on the infatuated plea that the Congress was an illegal Assembly, at once opposed the application. Thus, upon a mere point of etiquette, was this rare opportunity of repairing the errors and misunderstandings of the past not only thrown away, but thrown away for ever. Only sixty-eight members voted that Franklin should be heard

* "Rebellion! foul dishonouring word,
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained
The holiest cause that tongue or sword
Of mortal ever lost or gained.
How many a spirit, born to bless,
Hath sunk beneath the withering name,
Whom but a day's, an hour's success,
Had wafted to eternal fame!"

Lalla Rookh.

at the Bar of the House, in opposition to a majority of two hundred and eighteen.

In the mean time, Ministers were devising other irritating measures, which were destined to complete the alarm and exasperation of the Colonists. They not only pro-
Feb. 2. posed a vote for a large augmentation of the sea and land-forces of the mother-country—a most offensive measure since its unmistakable object was the reduction of America by force of arms—but also, in retaliation for the non-importation and non-exportation agreement adopted on the other side of the Atlantic, carried a Bill through Parliament which, calculated as it was to ruin the trade and commerce of America, was certainly a measure of excessive severity. Not only did its provisions impose a cruel restraint upon the commerce between the New England Provinces and Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies, but it endeavoured to starve them into submission by excluding them from the privilege of fishing in the Newfoundland waters. It was during the progress of this measure through the House of Peers, that Lord Camden once more warned his
Feb. 18. audience of the perils and disasters which they were provoking. So vast, he said, was the extent of America; so inexhaustible were its internal resources; so united were the inhabitants among themselves, and so righteous was their cause, that any attempt on the part of the mother-country to coerce her Colonies must not only end in a signal failure, but would ultimately and inevitably lead to their Independence. It was on this occasion that Lord
Mar. 15. Sandwich—the notable "Jemmy Twitcher"—delivered that cruel and insolent tirade against the valour and honour of the American people, which, more than weightier wrongs, tended to confirm their undying aversion to the British Aristocracy. "Suppose," he said, "the Colonies to abound in men, of what importance is the fact? They are raw, undisciplined, and cowardly. I wish, instead of forty or fifty

thousand of these brave fellows, they would produce at least two hundred thousand. The more the better. The easier would be the conquest. At the siege of Louisburg, Sir Peter Warren found what egregious cowards they were. Believe me, my Lords, the very sound of a cannon would send them off as fast as their feet could carry them." * Such was the language made use of by the great-great-grandson of that sturdy Earl, who, in the same noble cause which was now the cause of the American people, had led the storming-party at the siege of Lincoln, who had fought under the republican banner at the battles of Marston Moor and Naseby, and who had been the colleague and associate of the men who dyed the scaffold with the blood of Charles the First. But if Lord Sandwich was descended from Edward Montagu, so also was he the lineal descendant, by a generation the fewer, of the libertine Rochester. Very different from his language was that in which it was responded to by the virtuous and unsophisticated

* The siege of Louisburg in 1745—which was carried on conjointly by an American land-force commanded by one of their own countrymen, General William Pepperell, and a naval force commanded by Commodore, afterwards Vice Admiral, Sir Peter Warren—is known to have been one of the most brilliant exploits performed during the last century. What authority Lord Sandwich may have had for asserting that Sir Peter found the Americans "egregious cowards," it would apparently not be very easy to ascertain. Unfortunately the British Commodore's despatch, giving an account of the capture of Louisburg, cannot be discovered at the Admiralty. In a subsequent despatch, however, dated in October 1745, he expresses his gratification at certain honours and other rewards, having been conferred by George II. upon General Pepperell and the American troops engaged on the occasion. Happily in the House of Commons their conduct was spoken of in very different language than in the House of Lords. "In that war," said Mr. Hartley in his speech on American affairs, March 27, 1775, "they took Louisburg from the French single-handed, without any European assistance; as mettled an enterprise as any in our history; an everlasting memorial of the zeal, courage and perseverance of the troops of New England. The men themselves dragged the cannon over a morass which had always been thought impassable, where neither horses nor oxen could go, and they carried the shot upon their backs." *Parliamentary History*, vol. xviii. col. 556. For the great service which General Pepperell rendered to England by the capture of Louisburg he was created a Baronet of the Kingdom of Great Britain. *London Gazette*, 6 to 10 August 1745. He died at his seat, Kittery, Maine, July 6, 1759.

sons of America. "Independence of Great Britain," said the eloquent and amiable Joseph Warren * to his countrymen, "is not our aim. No! our wish is that Great Britain and the Colonies, like the oak and the ivy, may grow and increase together. But if these pacific measures are ineffectual, and if it appears that the only way to safety is through fields of blood, I know you will not turn your faces from your foes, but will undauntedly press forward until tyranny is trodden under foot." † Still more heart-stirring were the words addressed by Patrick Henry to the Virginian Assembly in the old church of Richmond. "If we wish to be free," he exclaimed; "if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending; if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight. I repeat it, Sir—*we must fight!* An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us." ‡—"We feel ourselves bound to you," wrote the Committee of New York to the general Committee of South Carolina,—"by the closest ties of interest and affection. We consider this season as big with American glory

* This gallant soldier, descended from an early settler in Boston, was killed at the battle of Bunker's Hill, 17 June 1775, at the early age of thirty-five, whilst serving in the trenches as a volunteer.

† Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 255.

‡ Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry, p. 122. Third Edition.

"'Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just'"

exclaimed Richard Henry Lee on the same occasion. *Grahame's Hist. of the United States*, vol. iv. p. 370, *note*. When the gallant Israel Putnam was asked by an English officer whether he did not think that five thousand British veterans would be able to march from one end of the Continent to the other—"No doubt," was the reply, "if they conducted themselves properly, and paid for what they wanted; but should they attempt it in a hostile manner the American women would knock them on the head with their ladles." *Life of Israel Putnam, in Sparks's American Biography*, vol. vii. p. 164.

or American infamy; and therefore most ardently wish you the direction and aid of that Almighty Being who presides over all." *

And of the same mind also had become Benjamin Franklin. Every recent proceeding of the British Legislature had only too clearly shown him that prejudice and bigotry were too strong for the cause of humanity and truth. He had attended the debates in the House of Lords, as we have seen, on each occasion of Lord Chatham introducing his conciliatory propositions, and when it was evident that the splendid eloquence of the great orator was lost upon his insensible hearers, the American had turned away in bitter disappointment and disgust. "Hereditary legislators!" he exclaimed; "there would be more propriety, because less hazard of mischief, in having hereditary professors of mathematics." † These are the men, was his bitter remark, who, though apparently without sufficient intelligence to manage a herd of swine, nevertheless arrogate to themselves the right of directing the destinies of three millions of virtuous and enlightened Americans! To James Bowdoin of Boston we also find him writing—"The eyes of all Christendom are upon us, and our honour as a people is become a matter of the utmost consequence. If we tamely give up our rights in this conquest, a century to come will not restore us in the opinion of the world. We shall be stamped with the character of dastards, poltroons, and fools, and be despised and trampled upon, not by this haughty and insolent nation only, but by all mankind." "Believe me, dear Sir," writes Jefferson on the 29th of November, "there is not in the British Empire a man who more cordially loves a union

* Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 60.
† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 504.

with Great Britain than I do. But, by the Power that made me! I will cease to exist before I yield to a connexion on such terms as the British Parliament propose. And in this, I think, I speak the sentiments of America." *

* Memoirs and Correspondence of Thomas Jefferson, vol. i. p. 153.

APPENDIX.

I.

AD SERENISSIMUM GEORGIUM WALLIÆ PRINCIPEM IN OBITUM FREDERICI WALLIÆ PRINCIPIS.

Spes, nuper altera, prima nunc Britanniæ!
Sic Ille voluit summus omnium Arbiter,
Potens vel ipsis imperare regibus,
Qui, regna justo ponderans examine,
Hîc ponit apices, inde sublatos rapit:
Datare seris jura quondam posteris!
Dum facilis ætas patitur, et animus sequax
Artes in omnes, disce nunc præludere
Sorti futuræ; disce nunc quid debeas
Patriæ, quid illa debitura sit tibi.
En! quanta sese laudis aperit area!
Persona quanta sustinenda te manet!
Desideretur ut minus tandem pater,
Gentis voluptas, heu! brevis, longus dolor:
Hæreditatis jure cum sceptro ut simul
Avita virtus in nepotem transeat.
Tu, destinatus imperare liberis,
Parere priùs assuesce; inoffenso pede
Dum lubricæ per semitam puer'tiæ;
Ducens volentem leniter Mentor tuus,
Primum esse civem, deinde principem docet;
Generosum et indolem, insitamque vim boni
Cultu salubris disciplinæ roborat.
Procul, O! facessat; sed tamen veniet dies,
Acerba, quamvis sera; sed aderit dies,
Quando ille plenus gloriæ, et vitæ satur,
Cælo receptus, grande depositum tibi

Tradet tuendum : in te gemens Britannia
Recumbet inclinata : tu pectus tibi
Casus in omnes et virile, et regium,
Ac par secundis, majus adversis, para ;
Utrobique constans, et simile semper sui.
Custosque juris civium, et tui tenax,
Regnare doctus ; nec sacri fastigii
Oblitus unquam, nec tamen nimis memor :
Ingredere cælis, auspicantibus, duce
Virtute, famulâ sorte, comite gloriâ.*

GULIELMUS GEORGE.

These once famous verses would seem to have been for the first time printed in a scarce volume, of which there is a copy in the King's Library at the British Museum, entitled "Academiæ Cantabrigiensis Luctus in obitum Frederici celsissimi Walliæ Principis, Cantab. Mense Maii MDCCLI." Dr. George's Iambics are also to be found in an edition, by J. Prinsep, of the Musæ Etonenses, "Londini Typis Caroli Rivington MDCCLV." The former collection consists of ninety-four copies of verses, of different metres, in the English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Arabic languages. The same year, Oxford, not to be outdone in loyalty by the sister University, printed a similar volume at the Clarendon Press—entitled "Epicedia Oxoniensia in obitum celsissimi et desideratissimi Frederici Principis Walliæ," also composed in different metres, and written in no fewer than the English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Phœnician, Etruscan, Arabic, Syriac and Welsh languages. Had Prince Frederick, instead of frequenting bull-baits and supping with royal midwives, held out, at the time of his death, the promise of

* The edition of the Musæ Etonenses by Prinsep, Rivington, MDCCLV., contains the following dedication :—

Vivo reverendo
Gulielmo George S. T. P.
Decano Lincolniensi
Nec non Collegii regalis præposito dignissimo
Etonæ atque Cantabrigiæ
per omnes literarum humaniorum gradus
alev ἀριστεύοντι ;
hæc Etonensium suorum carmina
Ipsius pleraque auspiciis condita,
dat dicat dedicat
Optimo quondam præceptori.
Discipulus, devinctissimus.

J. PRINSEP.

the Black Prince or of Henry Prince of Wales—or even of Marcellus himself—his loss could not have been commemorated by more exaggerated eulogiums. Men of the world celebrated the event in briefer, perhaps in truer elegies, than those of men of the cloister :—

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather.
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another.
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her.
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation.
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
There's no more to be said."

II.

[The "Battle" referred to in the next letter,* was the Battle of Minden. "Lord George," of course, means Lord George Sackville, who was subsequently cashiered for his conduct during the action. The "Duke," who is described as "sinking" under the effect of the news, was Lord George's father, the Duke of Dorset, whom Walpole, in another of his letters at this time mentions as having been "so unhappy in his sons and loving this so much." Mrs. Leneve, whose death is recorded, was long an honoured inmate of Sir Robert Walpole's, and afterwards of his son's, Horace Walpole's, house. "King of Cüstrin" refers to the raising of the siege of the fortress of that name, a few days previously, by Frederick the Great of Prussia; and, lastly, the "invasion," spoken of, has reference to certain rumours, which caused considerable alarm at the time, that England was about to be invaded by a French army of fifty thousand men.]

* This, and the other letters from Walpole which follow, are now for the first time published.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Augustus Selwyn, Esq.

"STRAWBERRY HILL, *August* 29, 1759.

"All I know you shall know, though I dare to say, not a jot more than you know already. Just as the Battle turned, Prince Ferdinand sent Mr. Ligonier to order Lord George to bring up all the cavalry. That message was scarce delivered, before Fitzroy came to order only the British Cavalry. Lord George said there must be a mistake, and that he would go and ask Prince Ferdinand what he really would have. The Horse were not carried up; Lord George was coldly received after the Battle, Lord Granby warmly; they all dined together, and next day came out the famous order of thanks. Lord George was enraged, sent over for leave to resign and to return, has leave: has written an explanatory letter to the Duke of Richmond, which I have not seen, and is not come that I know. He is as much abused as ever poor Admiral Byng was, and by nobody so much as by my Lord Tyrawley. The Duchess imputes it all to malice, the Duke sinks under it. I seriously don't know a word more, nor have been in town, except a very few hours, since Mrs. Leneve's death.

"The great King is reduced to be king of Cüstrin; the King of Spain is dead; regiments of light horse swarm as the Invasion disappears. This is all the Gazette knows, till General Yorke mistakes some other defeat for a victory. Adieu!

"Yours ever,

"H. W."

III.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Augustus Selwyn, Esq.

"Thursday night, 10 o'clock, [1759.]

"I wrote Mr. Williams* a very ignorant letter this evening; I just hurry a few lines to you, very little more informed, but to prepare you for some very bad Prussian news.† The day before yesterday Mr. Yorke ‡ had sent a victory over the Russians, the second time such a

* George James Williams, the gay and witty friend both of Selwyn and Walpole, better known as "Gilly Williams."

† The defeat of the King of Prussia at Kunersdorf on the 12th of August.

‡ The Hon. Joseph Yorke, K.B., third son of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, was employed as Ambassador at the Hague from 1751 to 1780. He died, a Field Marshal, in 1792, having been created, in 1788, Baron Dover.

victory has been a defeat! Yesterday, at past three, Lord Holderness received a mysterious letter; I don't know from whence; not a word of it was told; upon which the Stocks took it into their head that the King of Prussia was killed, and in their panic tumbled down a hundred pair of stairs. Betty * says all the Germans are in tears; my Lady Townshend has been with Hawkins † to know if it is possible for the King of Prussia to live after his head is shot off. But here is a little comfort. General Ellison tells me that my Lord Anson, half an hour ago, received a letter from a very sensible man—*his Lordship* says—at Ostend, which says the action was very bloody, but not decisive, except that it appeared by the consequences that the Russians had the advantage, and that this account is rather a French one. Where the goodness or sense of this account lies, General Ellison does not tell me—I suppose my Lord did not tell him. Adieu!

"P.S.—The D. of D. carried a letter from his son to the King yesterday. Townshend's Advertizer."

IV.

The Hon. Horace Walpole to George Augustus Selwyn, Esq.

"Paris, *Jan.* 31st, 1766.

"I go step by step with the British Ambassador. He has achieved the payment of the Canada bills: I have obtained leave from Madame Geoffrin for you to have a copy of her Picture. His Excellence has not demolished Dunkirk, but has made great progress towards it. I have

* A fruiterer in St. James's Street, whose shop—in consequence of her engaging manners, her knowledge of all that was passing in the gay world, and the fund of anecdote of which she was the mistress—was long rendered the favourite resort of the witty, the high-born, and the fashionable. Her real names were Mrs. Elizabeth Neale. Mason has perpetuated her fame in the "Heroic Epistle:"

"And patriot Betty fix her fruit-shop there."

Her death took place, August 30, 1797, at the age of sixty-seven, "at her house facing St. James's Street at the top of Park Place";—this being the same street in which she had been born, and which she was accustomed to say that she had never slept out of but twice in her life; once when she went to pay a visit to a friend in the country, and the second time at an Installation of the Knights of the Garter at Windsor. See *Walpole's Letters*, vol. ii. p. 213 and *note by Cunningham; Gentleman's Magazine for* 1797, p. 891; and *Selwyn Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 230.

† Cæsar Hawkins, the eminent surgeon of the last century.

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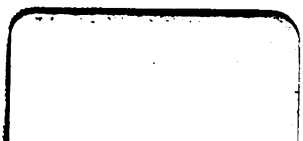
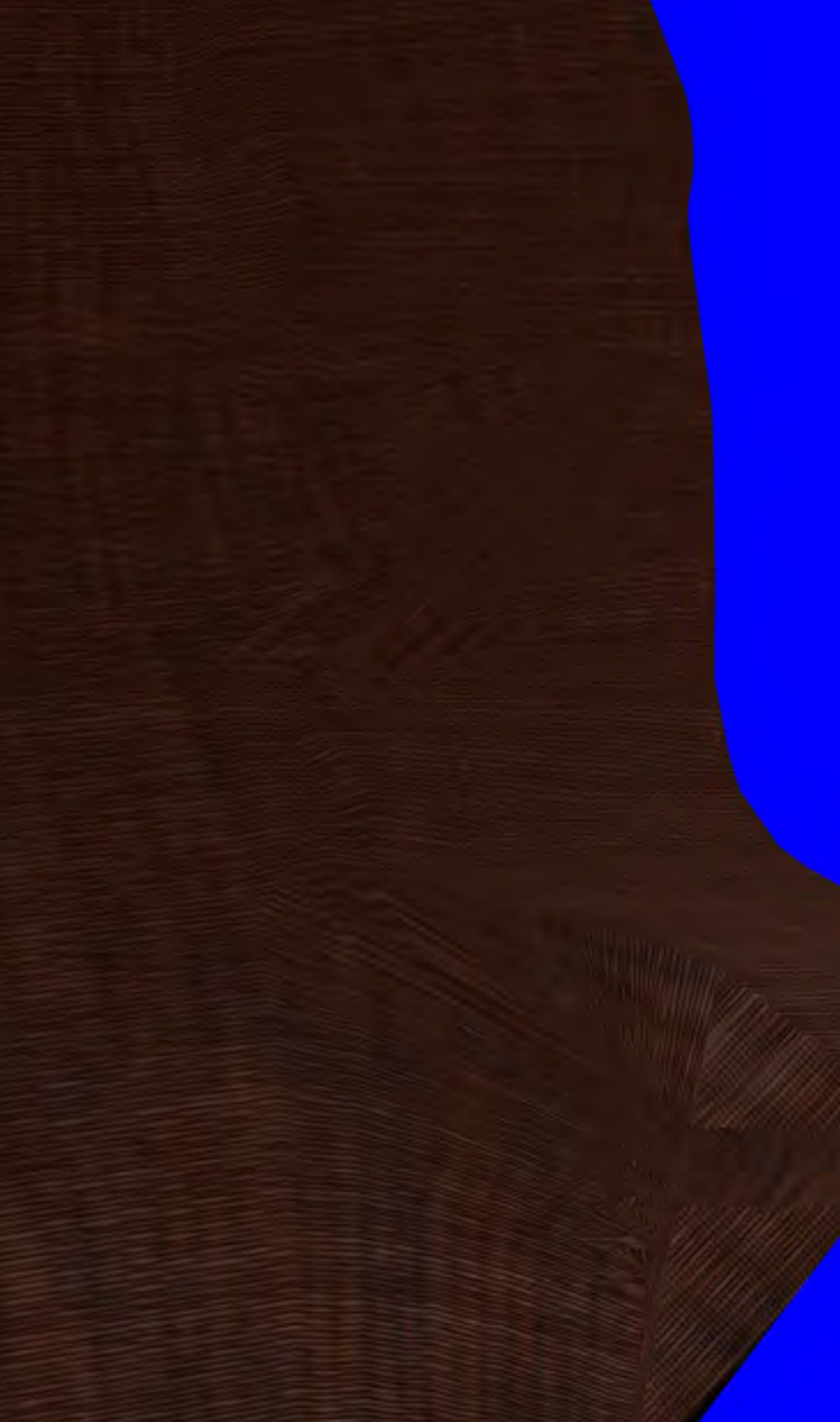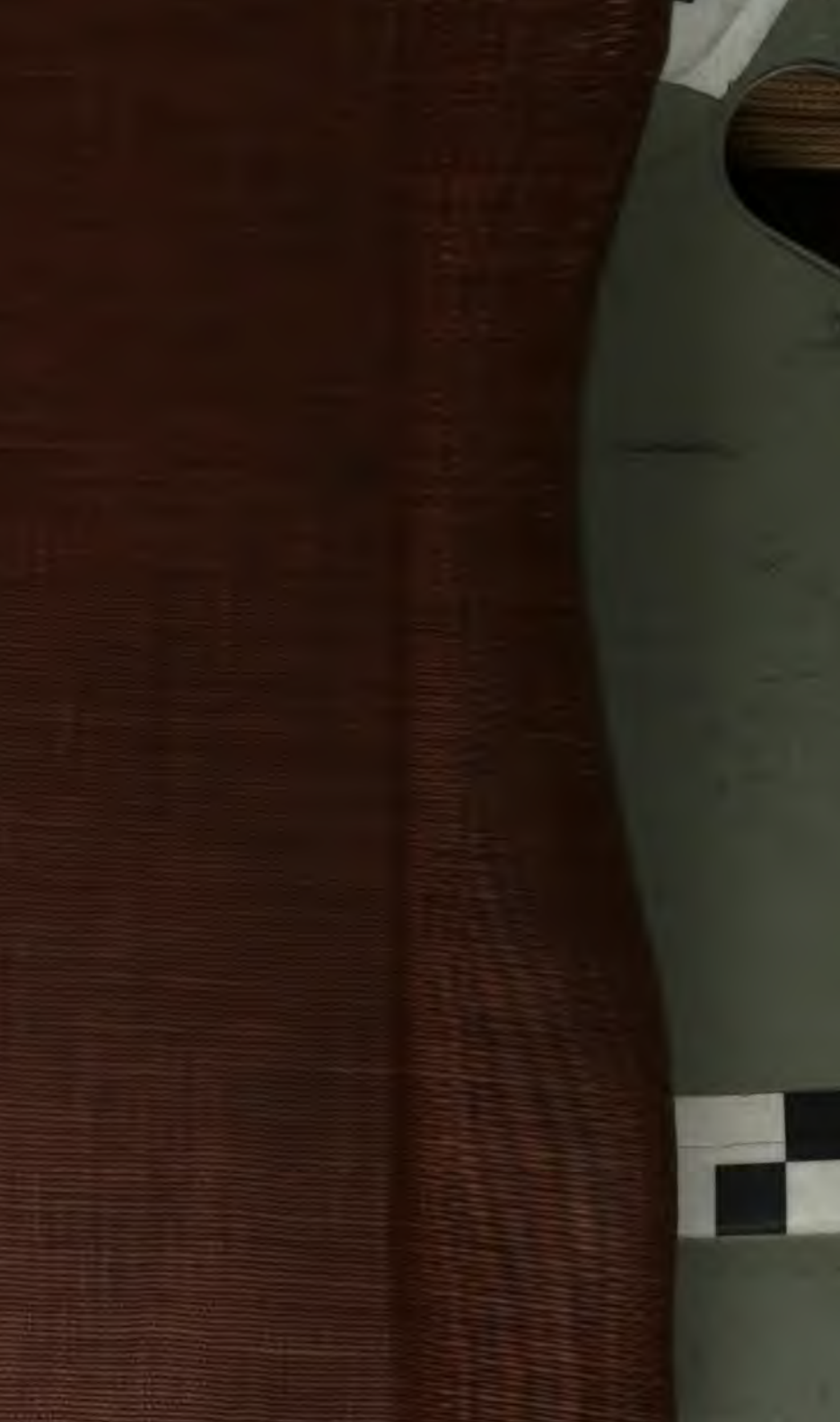
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